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FIELD-MARSHAL SIR DONALD STEWART, G.C.B., G.C.S.I., C.I.E.

Field-Marshal Sir Donald Stewart
G.C.B., G.C.S.I.

FIELD-MARSHAL
SIR DONALD STEWART
G.C.B., G.C.S.I., C.I.E.

AN ACCOUNT OF HIS LIFE, MAINLY IN HIS OWN WORDS

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EDITED BY

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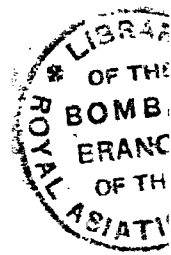

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS AND MAPS

LONDON
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET
1903

22795

THIS BOOK IS

DEDICATED

TO

LADY STEWART, C.I.,

WITHOUT WHOSE LOVING INSPIRATION THE LETTERS OF WHICH IT CHIEFLY CONSISTS WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN WRITTEN.

PREFACE

THE idea of publishing a sketch of the Life of Field-Marshal Sir Donald Stewart originated with the friend of his boyhood and later years, Lord Mount Stephen.

Sir Henry Cunningham, to whom the task of writing the book was in the first instance entrusted, collected and arranged a large number of letters, memoranda, diaries, and official papers, when the break-down of his health rendered it impossible for him to proceed further with the work. Lord Mount Stephen then invited me to complete it. He explained that what he desired was a portrait in one volume "of the man as his friends knew him, public and historical events being introduced only for the purpose of showing Sir Donald's connection with them, and the traits of character which they brought out."

I found on perusal of Sir Donald Stewart's letters and diaries that they were written in so natural and characteristic a style, that they form to a large extent an "unconscious autobiography," and

that my task would mainly be one of selection and arrangement.

Sir Henry Cunningham, to whom my best thanks are due for much help and encouragement, left me free to deal as I thought proper with his portion of the work, and the introduction and a great part of the first chapter are little altered from his original draft. Owing to the acquisition of much additional material, especially a large number of letters to Lady Stewart, the subsequent chapters have been recast and greatly expanded, and the responsibility for them rests entirely on me. I am deeply sensible of the confidence reposed in me by Lady Stewart in permitting me to choose extracts from Sir Donald's letters. I can only say that I have tried hard to justify the trust.

I have to express my sincere thanks to many of Sir Donald Stewart's friends who have helped me, especially to Field-Marshal Sir Henry Norman, who has given me invaluable aid and suggestions; to General Sir Peter Lumsden, to the Marquis of Ripon, Field-Marshal Earl Roberts, Sir Arthur Godley, General Sir John M'Neill, General Sir James Hills-Johnes, General E. F. Chapman, Mr George Ricketts, the Rev. W. Forsyth, D.D., the Rev. T. J. L. Warneford, and others, the importance of whose help is made clear in the book

itself. Many have contributed to its pages—others have permitted the publication of important letters and papers. All have shown the highest regard and esteem for Sir Donald Stewart's memory.

It is only necessary to add that in the spelling of Oriental names and words, I have, as far as possible, followed the mode adopted by Sir Donald Stewart.

G. R. ELSMIE.

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INTRODUCTION

For several generations it has been a tradition in many Scottish families to look to India as the predestined sphere of sons for whom there was scant room round the family hearth, and who had to carve their way in the world with their own strong arms, whenever Fortune offered an opening. There is no branch of the Indian Service where some vigorous Scotsman has not made his presence felt. In this honourable Society it would be difficult to point to a more impressive figure than that of the man with whom the following pages are concerned; or to a career which, in the public interests, may be more heartily commended to the remembrance of his countrymen.

His career is typical — a good and honoured type—the Scottish lad, with few possessions except a sturdy frame, energy, pluck, and high spirits, forcing his way to the front, confronting difficulty, seeking the post of danger—undaunted, gay, courageous—giving in each new sphere of action to which his country called him fresh evidence of strength, sagacity, and trustworthiness, passing at last—rich in honour and friends—from the stage on which he had played so distinguished a part. Long in the minds of those friends will live the recollection of that striking personality, the

lithe and active frame, the vigorous movement, the furrowed face, the shaggy pent-house of white eyebrow overhanging the keen but kindly eyes, the cheery voice, the high spirits that broke into fun at the first moment of relaxation—a demeanour that told of fortitude, manliness, honour, generosity. Such men it is well for friends, for country, to remember. Their careers enrich the national ideal, enrich and ennoble it. They form part of the tradition which we are proud to maintain, and which, in moments of emergency, fires our zeal and strengthens our nerves. It is well to remember them. Yet, amidst the hurry and crowd of life, how easy, how almost inevitable, is forgetfulness! How quickly incidents are crowded out of sight, grow confused and obscure! How meagre is often all that can be recalled of scenes and times which have hardly passed out of current life, or ripened into history! How dim is the recollection of survivors, and how few survive! It is well, while yet it can be done, to glean what we may of a fast-perishing harvest, and to place on record, in more distinct outline than treacherous memory is apt to preserve, the main incidents of a fine character and a memorable life.

The period of Sir Donald Stewart's Indian career embraced many momentous events, many important dynastic and political changes, great additions to the British Empire of territory and responsibility, great enhancements of the difficulties and dangers of an alien Empire. He arrived at Calcutta just as Lord Auckland's abortive attempt to solve the Afghan problem was closing in the direst disgrace and disaster that English

arms have ever known. He lived to see and take part in another Afghan war, to lead a British force to Cabul by the same route as Nott had followed thirty-eight years before, to despatch one army to a victorious issue, and to march another out of the country without firing a gun or losing a man. He witnessed Dalhousie's magnificent career of energy, conquest, and development—the tremendous re-action of the Mutiny, the gradual process of restoration and reconstruction — the changes which that reconstruction involved, the passing away of the East India Company with its many honourable traditions, the conversion of its Army into an Imperial Force. He had occasion to study deeply, alike as soldier and administrator, the difficult questions to which the advance of Russia towards our neighbours and allies gave rise. Wide indeed was the field of experience from which this good servant of his country had gathered the store of wisdom, insight and knowledge of men and things which rendered his presence so real a source of strength alike in the field, the bureau and the council chamber.

Of the spirit in which these services were rendered—the loyalty, unselfishness and high sense of duty which inspired and guided every step in Sir Donald Stewart's career—his own letters and journals will, it is believed, be found to afford sufficient proof. Written in every variety of circumstance—always under the strain of multifarious official duties—sometimes in the hurried interval between two engagements—sometimes on the eve of enterprises as fateful as the assault on Delhi, they invariably breathe the same heroic mood of forti-

tude, confidence and high spirits. From first to last there is not a phrase, a thought, which falls short of the highest standard of chivalry, or which speaks of anything but generosity and kindliness. We find a nature of fine simplicity—a manly and honest ambition, unsullied by selfishness or self-advertisement. We understand, as we read, how it was that Sir Donald Stewart had the happiness to pass through life surrounded by so many and such devoted friends, and to leave so strong and lasting an impression on all with whom in the ordinary intercourse of society he had to do. Some of his old companions, who followed him to the grave, felt that with him a brightness had gone out of life. The present compilation, prompted by the affection of his friend, Lord Mount Stephen, may, it is hoped, serve to recall to them and to others some traits of a character which it is good to have known, and impossible to remember without esteem and love.

H. S. C.
G. R. E.

FIELD-MARSHAL SIR DONALD STEWART

CHAPTER I

FROM FORRES TO PESHAWUR

THE story of Donald Martin Stewart begins like Shakespeare's great drama of *Macbeth*, in the romantic neighbourhood of Forres, in the county of Elgin. The future Field Marshal was born on the 1st March, 1824, at Mount Pleasant, in the parish of Dyke, close to the little estuary where the river Findhorn gives its waters to the Moray Firth, and possibly not far from the fabled heath where the weird sisters fostered—with such fatal result—that inborn spirit of ambition which led to the kingship and subsequent ruin of the successful leader of Duncan's forces. But, beyond association with the country round Forres, the ancient and modern Scottish Generals had little in common. Stewart met no malign influence in the land of his birth, or elsewhere, which could succeed in sowing the seed of an evil ambition in his heart. The whole of his career was marked by the

absence of a base spirit of self-interest, and by the presence of a strong love of duty, which, guided by calm, patient, and eminently practical wisdom, led him gradually but surely to the highest positions. These, in the opinion of the most competent judges, he filled with complete success until the end—"towering above the rest."

Donald Stewart was a thorough Highlander by descent on both father's and mother's side. His strong Norse features and well-knit frame bespoke his race. There is a proverb, "All Stewarts are not sib to the King." Nevertheless, he came of the stock of the Stewarts of Fincastle, in Perthshire, and the Stewarts of Fincastle boast of some of the bluest of Highland blood, and trace their descent from Alexander, Earl of Buchan, whom admiring posterity remembers by the *sobriquet* of "Wolf of Badenoch."

Leaving these legendary altitudes, we come to solid ground in the fact that, early in the seventeenth century, the Stewart family settled at Kincardine in Strathspey. Sir Donald Stewart's grandfather, John, was a leading member of the Kincardine Church during the pastorate of Mr Grant, a notable minister of the united parishes of Abernethy and Kincardine, who occupied that post from 1765 to 1820. John had a powerful and vigorous voice, of which he loved the sound, and traditions of Kincardine record an occasion on which the minister, anxious to improve the psalmody of his congregation by the importation of a skilled instructor from Argyllshire, considered it a necessary condition of success that the too ambitious performance of his parishioner should be restrained.

"Instead of a sermon," he announced, "we shall now occupy ourselves with the praise of God, and you, John (addressing Mr Stewart), will please keep silence and not give us any of your bohoos." It is pleasant to know that, notwithstanding this unceremonious suppression of native talent, the intimacy between the Stewart family and the Minister of Abernethy continued unimpaired, and that John Stewart's grandson, Donald, was accustomed to describe himself as "a grandson of the Manse." In the next generation, Robert Stewart foreshadowed the military achievements of his more distinguished son by serving as a lieutenant in the Perthshire Rifle Militia for fifty years, a period of service in a single rank, of, perhaps, unexampled duration. We catch glimpses of a sturdy, rugged, old Highlander, with red hair, erratic and indolent habits, and a temperament which rendered him occasionally rather "difficult." His wife, if we may accept the recollections of a contemporary, had a somewhat bad time with the old lieutenant when he returned from a round of visits to his friends in Strathspey or along the coast. The following remarks and extract, however, contributed by the Rev. William Forsyth, D.D., the present minister of Abernethy—an early friend and fellow-student of Donald Stewart, materially soften the picture of the old man.

Dr Forsyth writes: "Sir Donald's father, commonly called 'Captain Bob,' was married at the Manse of Abernethy. My mother, Jane Mackintosh, Dell of Rothiemurchus, was bridesmaid. . . . . He had a large family. Though always in straits, he managed to give his sons a good education,

and then he let them shift for themselves. . . . . Among other accomplishments, he was a clever billiard player."[1]

From Robert Stewart to the Rev. W. Forsyth.

HEATH COTTAGE, NEW SCONE,
PERTH, *9th April* 1869.

MY DEAR SIR,—I was much gratified at the receipt of your kind letter from the Manse of Abernethy, from where I got many a letter in my day. It is a house that will be dear to me while I breathe . . . . from the fatherly and motherly kindness I experienced from dear and good Mr and Mrs Grant, who treated me always as if I had been a near relative, and whose memory I shall love and revere while I sojourn here below. I was always at the dear Dell. I rejoice to learn that my early favourite, your dear worthy mother, is keeping pretty well. Oh! how I would enjoy a day in her company and a talk over events long passed away. My time in the course of nature must be very short on this weary earth. I was fourscore years on the 12th last month—but, alas! the old *man* still is not conquered. . . .

Donald Stewart's mother, Flora, described as "a very handsome woman," had — for those to whom genealogies possess any charm—a really interesting pedigree. Her father, Donald Martin, the youngest of seven stalwart brothers—all famous athletes—came of a stock which for three centuries had made itself respected among the Highland clans, and is still remembered in the local traditions of the Scottish Isles. Angus Martin-nan-Cath, *i.e.* "Martin of the battles," won repute by doughty deeds in Ireland on behalf of his fellow Islemen in

[1] His son, Donald, was proficient in billiards till the end of his life.

the time of Queen Elizabeth. Another Martin, Donald, kept house in brave fashion at Duntulm in Skye. Another, halfway through the seventeenth century, founded the family of the Martins of Beallach, near Duntulm. Another, commanding a body of horse under his kinsman, Sir Alexander MacDonald, had the distinction of achieving a successful embassy to the camp of the Duke of Cumberland after Culloden, as envoy of the MacDonalds. The prestige of the family was enhanced by judicious marriages with good old families—Mackinnons, MacAlisters, and other of the clans of Skye, each of whose pedigree was all that the most clannish Highlander could wish.

"Through either MacDonalds or Martins," writes the family chronicler with an airy magnificence, "it is quite easy to trace ascent to the Lord of the Isles, the Kings of Scotland, or the Kings of Norway."

Without embarking on so ambitious a voyage in the sea of Scottish cousinhood, it may suffice to say that, through his grandmother, Ann, daughter of Norman MacDonald of Scalpa, Donald Stewart could claim kinsmanship with Sir John MacDonald, K.C.B., Colonel of the 42nd Royal Highlanders, and for twenty-five years Adjutant General of the army under the Duke of Wellington; General Alexander MacDonald, R.A., a distinguished Peninsular officer who fought at Waterloo; General Archibald MacDonald, Adjutant General to the King's troops in India, where he died in 1815; Sir Ranald Martin, foremost amongst the great medical officials of the

Indian Government; and—more picturesque association—with the Flora MacDonald of history and romance. One of Sir Donald's daughters still bears her name.

When he was about a year old, his parents moved from Mount Pleasant to another house in the neighbourhood, Sea Park, where Donald and his brothers' lives were endangered by the temptation of climbing about the ruins of Kinloss Abbey, which stood just outside the gates. They had some hereditary right to be interested in the ruins, for the Abbey was reputed to have been destroyed by their ancestor, the Wolf of Badenoch. One of Donald's brothers had a dangerous fall from his perch on the crumbling masonry, and Donald's safety was consulted by his being sent to school when he was four years old, at Findhorn, a small fishing village in the neighbourhood. Here he passed many happy hours among boats and nets, learning the lore of the local fisher folk. These pleasant times were cut short by his removal to the parish school of Dufftown in Banffshire, then in good repute as a seat of education. Here his parents settled for the sake of their children.

Donald's experiences, however, were not of unmixed happiness. His first teacher was a violent, hot-tempered, flogging schoolmaster of the old type, whose tender mercies made the little fellow's life a burthen to him. Fortunately for him, this too rigid disciplinarian soon died.

His successor was a young Scottish Divine, who cordially hated teaching, and was only waiting for the happy hour of deliverance to more

congenial employment. From such a teacher much was not to be learnt. Donald's real education began with Mr John Macpherson, a good scholar and mathematician and a keen sportsman. This gentleman took a fancy to Donald, and speedily won the boy's heart by allowing him the privilege of walking by his side on his shooting and fishing expeditions, and of carrying the spoil. Mr Macpherson had permission to fish the Elchies water on the Spey, and, on many a Saturday, master and pupil might be seen together on its banks, eager for an afternoon's sport, Donald sitting by in speechless admiration, while the Dominie was battling with a lively fish. To this delightful preceptor's merits Sir Donald bore affectionate testimony in after years. In September, 1888, in company with his old friend and schoolfellow, Sir George Stephen, now Lord Mount Stephen, Sir Donald paid a visit to his boyhood's home, and, in replying to a toast at the banquet given in their honour by the people of the town, he said: "I came here when about four years of age, and remained in this village,[1] till I went into the army at the age of sixteen. Whatever I may have done in the Service I attribute in a great degree to the training I received in the little school down in the village there, where I was educated by a gentleman, whose memory I love and respect. Many of you may remember him. He was the most highly educated and cultivated gentleman I ever met—a charming companion, and manly in every respect. I refer

[1] *I.e.* Dufftown continued to be his headquarters till he obtained his commission.

to the late John Macpherson. Of course, I had other teachers, but I look upon him as the master who laid the foundation of any attainments I may have reached."

In 1838 Donald Stewart was sent to the Elgin Academy, then considered the best school in the North of Scotland. He had been there but a year when he gained a small bursary in open competition at King's College and University, Old Aberdeen.[1] The Highland lad had at first some difficulty in taming his high spirits to the sobriety of academic life. Some boyish freak led to a fracas in the sacred precincts of the lecture room, and Donald Stewart fell before the stroke of a stalwart student of maturer years. Such an outrage on decorum aroused the ire of the authorities, and Dr Macpherson, the Greek Professor, expressed a sublime displeasure at Donald's share in the combat, by ignoring his presence at lecture for the rest of the term. The reproach sank deep. "It was," Sir Donald wrote in after years, "a severe punishment; but it was, on the whole, a just one; and I felt it all the more, because the Doctor was known to be one of the kindest of men. It was probably the turning-point in my life. Fortunately for me, I chummed with a hard-working lad, who had been a schoolfellow at Dufftown, and, moved by his example, I took to reading hard. For nearly five months I do not think I went to bed before three in the morning. During the daytime I did nothing ostensibly but amuse myself. My object was to get a fair place at the examinations to please my

[1] The Bursary was the 17th in order, value £5 per annum, sufficient at that time to cover all fees.

King's College, Old Aberdeen, about 1840. [*To face p.* 8.

parents, and I did my best. The result far exceeded my expectation, and no one was more astonished than myself when I heard my name called as the winner of the first prize in Greek, and first in the 'Order of Merit' in Latin.[1] Every one in the class thought it must be a mistake, and my name had to be called more than once before I moved from my seat. I was proud of my success, but I had a feeling that it was hardly deserved, as I knew there were many men of my term who were infinitely better scholars than myself."

In a letter, bearing the post-mark of Aberdeen, 27th March, 1840, addressed to Mrs Black, Willow Bank, Aberdeen, a lady who had been kind to him as a boy, Donald, with laconic modesty, announces this achievement—

MADAM,—I am happy to inform you that I have gained the first Greek prize in King's College.—Yours, D. M. STEWART.

Donald was now on the high road to a good degree in Arts. His University career was not, however, destined to be long enough for this. When he was sixteen he was, on the recommendation of his kinsman, Sir John MacDonald, nominated to a cadetship in the Indian Army by Sir John Cam Hobhouse, then President of the Board of Control.[2] In the Bengal Army Service list we find an entry, under date 26th August 1840, of the

[1] The "Order of Merit" followed the Prize List, and gave the names of Competitors, who, though they had not won prizes, were deemed worthy of honourable mention.

[2] In regard to young Stewart's choice of a profession, Dr Forsyth writes: "Besides our intercourse in our classes and rooms, Donald and I met often at the house of a kinswoman, Mrs Mackenzie. Mrs

humble petition of Donald Martin Stewart to be admitted to the military service of the East India Company, as a cadet of the Bengal Infantry, of Sir John MacDonald's testimony to the candidate's fitness, and of Sir John Cam Hobhouse's nomination, in exchange with another Director for a nomination to Madras. Pleasant, comfortable days of patronage, soon to be swept away by the vulgar stréam of competition!

Donald Martin Stewart's name was entered as No. 412, next to a very distinguished neighbour, Herbert Benjamin Edwardes,[1] whose number was 413. The two names travel side by side through many a volume of the Army List, and we trace, step by step, on the same page, the careers of two gallant brothers-in-arms.

So Donald, still blushing at his unexpected honours, bade adieu to Aberdeen and his chance of academic distinction. Many years later, in 1881, when he had made his way to fame, the University conferred upon him the honorary degree of LL.D.[2]

On the 15th February 1841, the young lad landed at Calcutta, and a few days later was posted as an ensign in the 9th Bengal Infantry, at

Mackenzie's mother, Mrs Machardy, an old lady of eighty, resided with her daughter. She was a grand-niece of the famous Colonel John Roy Stewart of Kincardine, and her father had fought at Culloden as an ensign in his uncle's regiment. Mrs Machardy had many stories of the Forty-five, and of the strange adventures of John Roy, and these may have done something to kindle the martial ardour of her young kinsman."

[1] The late Sir Herbert Edwardes, K.C.B.

[2] By this time, King's College, Old Aberdeen, and Marischal College, New Aberdeen, had been united and become the University of Aberdeen.

Donald Stewart,
in his seventeenth year,
from a miniature.

Map to illustrate Donald Stewart's Life from 1841 to 1859.

[To face p. 11.

Secrole, Benares. Brief as had been Donald's University career, it had at any rate taught him the art and pleasure of study. He now found a field where studious habits could be turned to practical account in mastering the vernacular language of the people. He set himself with a will to accomplish this, and with excellent results. In his regimental duties he speedily began to attract attention by proficiency in languages, as well as by smartness, intelligence, and zeal. In the year 1842 the regiment was stationed at Agra; in 1843 and 1844 at Ferozepore and at Sukkur in Sind. Early in 1845 the 9th marched to Lucknow, and in May 1846 it returned to Benares. Meanwhile, in 1844, Stewart had become a lieutenant, and, in the following year, had been appointed adjutant of the regiment. He was not long in establishing a reputation as one of the best adjutants in the Indian Army. General Sir Peter Lumsden, who joined in January, 1848, and became then, and continued through life, one of Sir Donald's intimate friends, has some pleasant recollections of the early days.

"The 9th Native Infantry," he says, "was known to the natives of India as the Jalésar ki Pultan.[1] It was under the command of a distinguished soldier and sportsman (with Donald Stewart as his adjutant), whom his contemporaries designated by the expressive *sobriquet* of 'Tiger Smith.' Stewart had then had about seven years of service, and was a lieutenant. He had always a happy facility of picking up languages, had passed

[1] *I.e.* The regiment of Jalésar—Jalésar being a town and sub-collectorate in the Etah district, North-West Provinces.

the interpreter's examination by the highest standard in Persian and Urdu, so was qualified to hold any appointment in India. He eventually became interpreter and quarter-master to his regiment, and was regarded as one of the best interpreters in the Army. . . . .

"The 9th Native Infantry, distinguished by its white facings and a peculiar clasp which the Sepoys wore on their shoes, was always one of the smartest and best drilled regiments in the service. It had a Rifle Company, to which Donald Stewart belonged. It was armed with the old Brunswick rifle, as distinct from the Brown Bess, with its flint and steel locks, with which the rest of the corps in those days was still armed.

"There were at this time no fewer than three Native Infantry Regiments quartered at Benares, to each of which a party of cadets, eight to a dozen in number, was attached, for the purpose of being drilled and otherwise grounded in the rudiments of their profession by the adjutant, assisted by the European sergeant-major. These young gentlemen were forwarded in batches from Calcutta, and their rawness and high spirits rendered the adjutant's post anything but a sinecure. They had to be drilled, morning and evening, and to be generally looked after at mess, and at all other times. Donald Stewart, though when off duty the best of companions and the soul of all sport and amusement, was regarded as somewhat of a martinet in matters of discipline. The newcomers were schoolboys, easily amused, and delighted with any form of diversion which presented itself. Each had a pony, a well-used slave-of-all-work, which

carried him to parade or mess, and, between whiles, served for a gallop after jackal, or fox, or pariah dog. A less innocent pastime was sometimes improvised.

"The streets of the Sacred City of Benares abounded in Brahmini Bulls, objects of popular veneration, and, when other forms of excitement failed, some lawless spirits found a splendid opportunity for a little amateur bull-baiting. The local authorities speedily protested that such a performance was a religious outrage, and would produce a disturbance; and the General commanding the Benares Division gave notice that the next culprit, brought to his notice, would be put under arrest and tried by court-martial."

Despite such difficulties, however, Donald Stewart succeeded in turning out some excellent soldiers, and the opportunities thus afforded of becoming personally acquainted with many young officers, was of great use to him in after times, when he was on the Staff at Headquarters. The experience which he now gained no doubt helped to make him—what he certainly became—a first-rate judge of men.

By this time, Donald Stewart's zeal and ability had begun to attract attention in higher quarters than the regimental mess-room. In December of 1847, we find General Kennedy, in his Inspection Report of the 9th Native Infantry, saying of Lieutenant Donald Stewart that "he is in an eminent degree qualified for his duties as adjutant."

In 1847, an event occurred which was destined to exercise no small influence on Donald Stewart's

subsequent career — his marriage with Miss Marina Dabine, daughter of Commander Dymock Dabine, R.N. The young lady was staying with her uncle, Colonel Carpenter, who held a Political appointment at Benares. She was the cynosure of many eyes, and Donald Stewart had the good fortune to carry off the prize from a host of admirers. The match was not on the lines of extreme prudence, for Donald had no income beyond his pay, and was burthened with sundry relics of bachelor extravagance, in the shape of a formidable pile of unpaid bills. The bride, however, amongst many qualifications for conjugal happiness, proved herself a first-rate financier, and speedily mastered the situation. The young couple resolutely faced the deficit, and shaped their expenditure with a view to its extinction, a result which was in no long time achieved. Sir Donald Stewart was fond of recalling how much, in his early days of impecuniosity, he owed to his wife's good sense and practical ability.

In 1849, the 9th Native Infantry was quartered at Umballa, and in 1850 at Lahore, where for some time the Stewarts resided in rooms in the Fort, a fine old building, which still retained some traces of Runjit Singh's magnificence. In 1850, Donald Stewart resigned the adjutancy, and was appointed interpreter and quarter-master of his regiment. At the end of 1852, the 9th Native Infantry was posted to Peshawur, and here Donald Stewart became acquainted with Henry (now Field-Marshal Sir Henry) Norman, who was stationed there as assistant adjutant-general of the Peshawur Division. The two men served together at the siege

of Delhi, and in the campaigns in Oudh and Rohilkund, and were often in close official contact in subsequent years. Their intimacy ripened into the warmest esteem and affection, and continued unimpaired till Sir Henry Norman stood beside his friend in his last moments at Algiers, in 1900.

About this time also began another friendship, which figured largely in Donald Stewart's after life. In August, 1852, Lieutenant Frederick Roberts,[1] marching up country to join his father on the north-west frontier, came upon a small cavalcade of ladies and children, whose march had come to a premature stoppage near Jullundur, owing to the desertion of their palanquin-bearers. Roberts, who was performing this part of his journey in the unwonted luxury of a hooded gig, known in India as a "buggy," placed it at the disposal of the ladies, and otherwise played the part of heaven-sent deliverer, with the gallantry for which the occasion called. One of the ladies proved to be Mrs Donald Stewart, who was on her way to join her husband at Lahore after a summer at Simla.

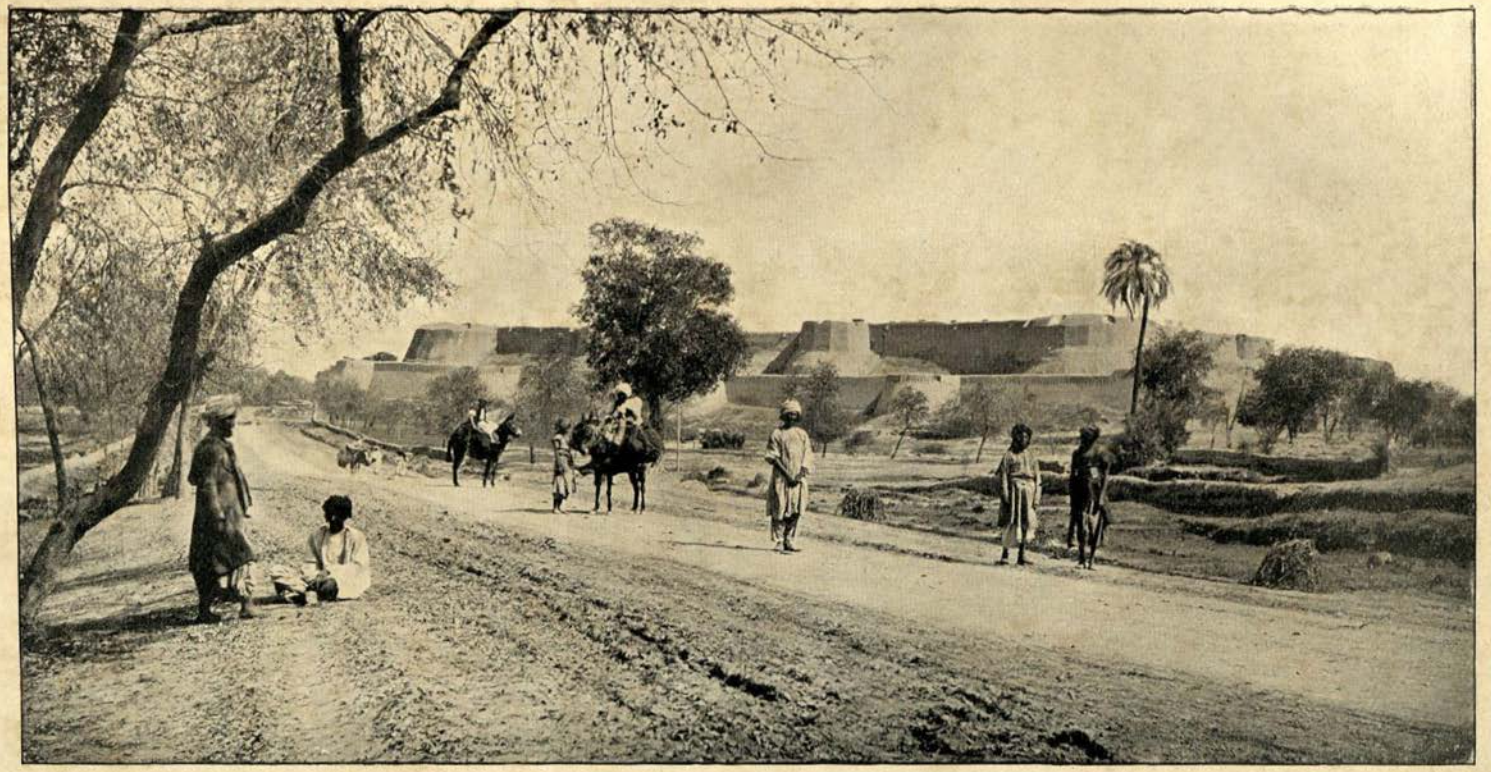
Of Donald Stewart's life on the Frontier at this time, Sir Henry Norman gives an interesting sketch:

"At Peshawur Lieutenant Stewart was appointed to perform the duties of post-master in addition to his regimental duties as interpreter and quarter-master; but he had no opportunity of distinguishing himself, except as a smart regimental officer and a good linguist, until the month of August 1854,[2] when, in consequence of aggressions by the tribe of

[1] Now Field-Marshal Earl Roberts, V.C., K.G., etc., etc.

[2] Stewart became a Captain on the 1st June 1854, see Appendix I., which contains a statement of his steps in Army rank, etc.

Momunds, an expedition was sent out for their chastisement, under Colonel Sydney Cotton of Her Majesty's 22nd Regiment. The force consisted mainly of two Infantry Regiments, the 1st Sikh Infantry and 9th Native Infantry—Stewart's own Regiment. The troops entered the Momund territory at Shah Musa Khel, on the left bank of the Cabul River, where it flows into the Peshawur district, and during two days destroyed the villages and towers of the Momunds. This work was carried on during a constant skirmish between our troops on the hillside and the enemy. On both days the heat was intense, and our men suffered from severe thirst. Stewart commanded the Rifle Company of his Regiment, which was employed on the heights, covering the destruction of the villages. I happened to be there, and was much struck with the steady way in which Stewart handled his men in difficult ground under fire, and by the manner in which, when the skirmishers were withdrawn, he marched his men in good order to the river side, and, piling arms, told them to fall out, and drink. I have on some other occasions seen men suffering from thirst, as were Stewart's men, break their ranks and run tumultuously to the first water they approached and the good discipline shown on this occasion impressed me deeply with Stewart's qualities as an officer. The adjutants of both the Infantry Regiments, that is, the 9th Native Infantry and 1st Sikh Infantry, were dangerously wounded. The force engaged on this occasion was small, and the officers were very few; but it may be worthy of note that Stewart was one of no less than six of those present who rose to the distinction of Knight Grand Cross



The Fort, Peshawur.

[*To face p.* 16.

of the Military Division of the Order of the Bath.[1] A few months after this affair I was removed to another Division of the Army, and had no intercourse with Stewart for nearly two years, until, in the end of November 1856, I accompanied the Commander-in-Chief, General Anson, to Aligurh, as representative officer of the Adjutant General's department. General Anson here reviewed the Head Quarters of the 9th Native Infantry, and was much struck by the appearance and smartness of Captain Stewart and by the fine turn-out of his company, the Rifles of the Regiment. As the result of a conversation the Commander-in-Chief had with me after the parade, I felt assured he would put Stewart on the Staff on an early opportunity."

General Osborn Wilkinson, who knew Stewart at Peshawur in 1852-53, writes of him, in a short sketch, as "Strikingly well built, a fine, manly young fellow." "All looked upon him as a first-rate officer with a clear head and sound judgment, and particularly astute." "His splendid figure and soldier-like appearance, cheery, confident temperament stamped him as a likely leader among men."

Hitherto, with the exception of the expedition against the Momunds before described, and some skirmishes with the Bussi Khel and Aka Khel Afridis in 1855, Donald Stewart had seen no active service in the field. Towards the close of the Sutlej campaign, his regiment marched up to join the force under Lord Gough; but the war ceased soon after the 9th Native Infantry reached the frontier, and before it had been engaged with the enemy.

[1] Viz. Sir Sydney Cotton, Sir James Brind, Sir Henry Norman, Sir Donald Stewart, Sir Peter Lumsden, Sir Charles Brownlow.

CHAPTER II

FROM PESHAWUR TO ALIGURH

In the month of January 1856, Donald Stewart began to write a series of interesting and graphic letters to his wife, which, though it has many breaks, makes it possible to tell the story of his life during the next twenty-five years, for the most part in his own words. He was no ordinary letter-writer. It was easy to him to use his pen. His way of putting things was free from obscurity, and the happy choice of words and phrases involved no apparent effort. The letters of 1856 and of the early months of 1857, deal mainly with matters of minor or private interest, and it will not be necessary to make many quotations from them, but those written on the outbreak of the mutiny—during the progress of the siege of Delhi and during the Afghan war of 1878-1880, rise to the level of historical records of the great events described, and from them very full extracts will be made. Many of the letters are of immense length. They are written in a clear and delicate hand, and a reader might well wonder how time was found to produce them, amid a life of so much active work. The answer is, that they were inspired by the spirit of perfect affection and union which existed between

Stewart and his wife, the writer having the fullest confidence that the things both private and public which interested him so keenly, would equally interest his chosen companion. Towards the end of 1855, the 9th Native Infantry received orders to march down country from Peshawur to Aligurh. The Stewarts had now a family of four children, and for their sakes it was settled that their mother should take them to England. In regard to means of transit to the sea coast, the choice lay between a journey of some 1500 miles in palanquins and post-carriages to Calcutta—and a voyage down the Indus, about 700 miles, to Kurrachee. The latter plan was chosen, and, on the 31st December, Stewart having accompanied his family to Attock, 40 miles from Peshawur, saw them start in a rude country boat on their long river journey. The boat was one of a fleet of five, which contained other European passengers and several native servants. The Indus, after it escapes from the gorge at Attock, is still confined within limits too narrow for its mighty volume. It winds much, and has high rocky banks and several well-known rapids. As soon as the boats were lost to view, Donald Stewart mounted his horse and rode back to Peshawur, where he was bound to be present for muster on the following morning, the 1st January. The boat containing Mrs Stewart and her children had gone down stream but a little way when the current drove it too near the right bank of the river. It struck on a sunken rock, receiving considerable damage. Serious leakage ensued. To land on the right bank was impossible. The boatmen determined to row to the other side

as quickly as they could, where they ran the vessel on a submerged rocky shelf, but not before the passengers, their bedding and luggage, were deep in the rising water. The remaining boats of the fleet saw what had occurred, and made for the shore as soon as possible. A friendly road engineer, Mr J. Cortlandt Anderson, came down in his English boat from Attock, and did all that he could to be of use. Mr Anderson's sister, Mrs Mulcaster, wife of Colonel Mulcaster of the Bengal Cavalry, was one of the voyagers in another of the boats. She forthwith disembarked, and, after a difficult scramble on foot over rocks and stones, arrived, to offer as much accommodation as was possible in her vessel. Meanwhile, Mrs Stewart had managed to send a letter by a horseman to Peshawur, to tell Captain Stewart what had happened, but, thanks to the kindness of Mrs Mulcaster and the skill of Mr Anderson in fitting up some additional shelter on her boat, Mrs Stewart was able to start afresh on her journey before it was possible for her husband to return to Attock. No further adventure occurred.

The first letter to be quoted was written by Donald Stewart on the 4th January at Peshawur, and was received by his wife at Dera Ismail Khan, some 150 miles down the river. It will be observed that, at the time of writing, Stewart was in the natural anxiety and bustle of a quarter-master on the eve of the outset of his regiment on a long march of more than 500 miles. Other letters give glimpses of life during the march, and in a small up-country station, when roads were for the most part unmetalled, and railways had not been constructed.

The Indus below Attock. (*From a Sketch by* Sir Peter Lumsden.) [*To face p.* 20.

Captain Stewart to Mrs Stewart.[1]

PESHAWUR, *4th January* 1856.

Both the letters I wrote to you on hearing of your accident at Attock were returned to me this morning. One I sent through Capt. James's[2] Police Sowars,[3] so that it might reach you without fail before you started. However, I have been sadly disappointed. You will wonder, no doubt, why I did not write to you. The fact is as above, and I was only waiting an answer to my letters to start for Attock, as I had no idea till I got your note from Mulcaster what arrangements had been made for you. How thankful we should be at your providential escape! I cannot now understand how your boat got to the side; however, I thank God that you were all saved. Pray thank Mrs Mulcaster for me for all her kindness to you. How do you all pack in her boat? You must find it hard work. . . . . We are now in camp, and it is raining. I am up to my eyes in indents and paper, and we have not got a single animal of our carriage. I don't know when we shall get off, but I think on the 7th. How do the children get on, poor little things? I can imagine the scene with them when your boat struck—it must have been heartrending—when you did not know whether you could be of any assistance to them or not. What a blessing it was that you were in the company of other boats. . . .

CAMP, MOOLLA MUNSOOR, NEAR ATTOCK,[4]
10th January 1856.

. . . I am going over to Attock to see the Munshi and find out from him all the particulars of your mishap, and likewise convince myself that your arrangements were as

[1] All the subsequent letters in this chapter are also from Captain Stewart to his wife.

[2] The Deputy Commissioner of Peshawur.

[3] Horsemen.

[4] The regiment had now started on its march.

comfortable as circumstances would admit. I cannot even now realise to myself the danger that you all escaped through God's mercy. If I can get hold of the boatman I shall find out exactly how it occurred that your boat did not follow Mrs Mulcaster's. . . . . We had rain almost the whole way to-day; it laid the dust and made the march very pleasant. I forget whether I told you that we have nothing but hackeries[1] in camp. They give a lot of trouble, as the men overload them as a matter of course. My servants are a little more active than they were when we were marching over to Attock. Fancy my astonishment at seeing the old bearer at the first encamping ground, after I had paid him up and given him a *chit*[2] at Peshawur! When I told him that his services were no longer needed, he wanted to know who was to arrange my shaving things in the morning on my arrival in camp, and when I told him that I could do that much myself, he walked off in disgust, but I find that he is travelling along with my baggage. It appears that when he said he wished to be discharged at Peshawur, he merely made the request, as he anticipated being taken into O.'s service; when he found that he could not get that, he made up his mind to put up with me. . . . .

CAMP, GOOJAR KHAN,[3] 18*th January*.

. . . . . You would be astonished if you saw my tent every day. It is a perfect picture of neatness; my belts, sword, cap, etc., all hung up on a rack, and writing apparatus laid out so nicely on the table. . . . .

CAMP GOOJRAT,[4] 26*th January* 1856.

. . . It is awfully dull and stupid in camp, and I often think, when I hear some black child cry, that it is one of our children, it is so unnatural to have no squalling children

[1] Country carts, used for baggage.
[2] Written character.
[3] In the Rawal Pindi district.
[4] About 70 miles N.W. from Lahore.

about the place. Poor little things! I should like to see their merry faces again. I hope you often speak to them about me, as I should not like them to forget me just yet. . . .

The regiment marched *viâ* Lahore, Ferozepore, Loodiana and Umballa to Meerut, where it arrived about the second week in March. A long halt was then made, as a hitch had occurred regarding the ultimate destination of the corps. In the first paragraph of the next quotation, reference is made to a very convenient practice of numbering letters, which was adhered to by Stewart during the important periods of his Indian career, and which has greatly facilitated the task of making extracts from his correspondence.

MEERUT, *3rd April* 1856.

. . . . . I must remind you that long ago I asked you to number your letters, so as to enable me to ascertain that I get them all regularly. I commenced this practice some time ago, as you may perceive by the number of this. Now don't forget, or there will be a row in the family, ... We are still uncertain whether we remain here or go to Delhi. The General says it will be settled soon, which is so far a consolation. I shall be much disgusted if we leave this station, which is by far the nicest place I have seen in the country. Our inspection went off without much *éclat*, as you may suppose; no one appeared to take any interest in it, or seemed to care how it was done. . . . .

Here we have a slight indication of the slackness which is now admitted to have prevailed to a considerable extent in the old native army, and to have been a contributing cause of the collapse which was soon to follow.

. . . . . If I could only pass myself off for an unmarried man, I should get on famously. I was doing considerable sammy to a young lady at the General's the other day, which the old boy observed, and called out aloud, so that every one at the table could hear: "It is no use your listening to Captain Stewart's nonsense, for he is a married man." The young lady seemed rather astonished, and did not appear to take half the interest in my agreeable conversation afterwards; so much for being a grass benedict. . . . .

We are awfully disgusted at hearing this morning that we are to go to Aligurh after all. We shall commence our march in a few days. This is particularly pleasing, after having made ourselves comfortable here. There is not a soul who is glad at the change.

But it probably saved them from being at Meerut on the 10th May 1857.

CAMP BULUNDSHAHR,[1] 15*th April* 1856.

. . . . . As I gallop the whole way, the march is nothing. I have my bed all ready to turn into, with a supply of books and a candle,[2] an arrangement which is all that I can desire. . . . . I must tell you some domestic news. The *bhisti* (water-carrier) came to grief the other day. I heard him say that he could not water the horses and bring water for the *tatties*[3] at the same time, upon which I remarked that he must contrive in some way to do both, though I did not expect him to be in two places at once. He rejoined that the thing was not to be done. I dismissed him, and went to the lines for a new water-carrier, who came at once. My friend repented when he saw the other man installed in his place, but I could not forgive his impertinence in giving me an answer—it is the only thing which

[1] Between Meerut and Aligurh.

[2] Stewart was very dependent on a candle by his bedside, as his letters from Afghanistan will show.

[3] Grass screens for cooling purposes.

riles me; any carelessness I can overlook, but an answer is too much, even for my mild disposition. . . . .

ALIGURH.

I have been appointed to the lucrative post of Station Staff, for which I am to get the enormous sum of 20 rupees a month. I am glad, however, as it gives me something to do in this dull place. . . . .

ALIGURH, 26*th April* 1856.

. . . . . I am very glad for one reason that I did not go home with our boys. I should have been in a regular fright the whole way at seeing them climbing about the steamer. I used to do that sort of thing myself, when I was young,[1] but I cannot give other boys the credit for being as well able to take care of themselves as I was at that time of life. . . . .

It is amusing to learn from the next extracts that Donald Stewart, in common with most Anglo-Indian officers, civil and military, went through the phase of wishing to see himself settled at home, with a miserable salary, and a humdrum billet. A year or two afterwards he "changed all that."

ALIGURH, 11*th May* 1856.

. . . . . I might get something to do at home—an adjutancy of Militia is not a bad thing. I hear it is upwards of £200 a year, with quarters. If it is as much as that, I might cut the Service and retire to my own fig-tree at once —I mean as soon as I am entitled to a pension. . . . I hope —— will be at Liverpool to meet you. You will be about as able to manage alone, and as useful as a swan on a turnpike, which appears to be the fashionable phrase in England for anything *malapropos*. . . . .

[1] *E.g.* the climbing on the ruins of Kinloss Abbey, p. 6 *supra*.

ALIGURH, 24*th May* 1856.

. . . . . I was dining out last night, and am going out to tiffin and dinner to-day. This is rather too much of a good thing, but as I am alone and have little or nothing to do—notwithstanding I am station-staff officer, adjutant, interpreter, and quarter-master and compiler of Pay Abstracts—it helps to pass the time. I never by any chance lie down during the day, but I fear that it must come to that in the end, as the thermometer has been close upon 90 in our cool house even. . . . . I shall not stick in the Service longer than I can help, for the idea of dangling on in a subordinate position, for upwards of thirty years, is something awful to contemplate. I have an idea that I shall be lucky if I am spared; but if I get the steps I anticipate, I shall have to pay heavily for them. However, as it is such a long time to look forward to, we shall say no more on this head at present. . . . .

Early in June, Stewart heard of the safe arrival of his family in England. During that month he got a few weeks' leave, and paid a visit to some old friends at Hansi. On his return he wrote:

ALIGURH, 30*th June* 1856.

. . . . . My horses, from being a month without work, are quite frantic. I saw the old grey walking about the compound this morning on his hind legs, trying to knock down the syce, and as for the trapper, he was just one remove from a Bengal tiger. However, I gave him a burster round the race-course, which took all the superfluous friskiness out of him, and the grey is to have his turn this evening. They are both looking so fat and clean, it would do you good to look at them. . . . . You will be astonished to hear that in my old age I have commenced learning the piano. I have only had one lesson from Fred Oldfield,[1]

[1] A brother officer.

but I can play the greater part of that new piece of music entitled "God Save the Queen." I can only do one hand as yet; my bass does not agree with the treble, so I had to give it up till I am more at home at the work. . . . .

ALIGURH, 11*th July* 1856.

. . . . . Since my last letter, there is not much in the shape of news to tell you, except that I am getting on with my music. I can go through the greater part of the "Ghost" melody in the *Corsican Brothers*, and play the accompaniments to some easy songs, but, alas! with only one hand. I cannot come the bass at all, at all, and I suppose I am too old to learn. When Flora[1] is old enough to teach me, I may try again, if I am then extant. . . . .

There is nothing new to tell you regarding the regiment. . . . . We gave a great entertainment to all the swells in the station on Tuesday last. We had all the civilians, colonels, etc.; a very jolly party it was, too, and went off very well, except for one thing: the fish, a splendid *ruhoo*,[2] was bad. It was quite good at breakfast-time, but the heat during the day dished it, and it smelt confoundedly at dinner, and was sent away. I can manage all about a dinner very well, except the pudding and the dessert, which regularly stumped me.[3] . . . . Our dinner and tea-set would rather astonish you; they consist of every known pattern, colour, and shape. . . . . There is a great deal of cholera going about the country just now. At Agra, thousands of deaths have taken place; the 3rd European Regiment has suffered frightfully. Several ladies and children have also died of the disease there. . . . .

ALIGURH, 11*th August* 1856.

. . . . . There is a report now going about that they are going to raise a Staff Corps, and that all officers in Civil,

[1] His eldest daughter. [2] An Indian river fish.
[3] Stewart evidently was manager of a "chummery."

Stud, Commissariat, Judge Advocate General's, and Public Works Departments are to be removed to it. . . . . However, I seldom give much credit to these reports, as they generally have no foundation whatever, but I see that the question has been mooted in some of the London papers, and in Parliament, so that something may be done. Whatever it is, it must do me some good. If I could only see a prospect of my majority, I would not take any appointment that could be offered to me, as I would rather command the regiment than anything I know of. . . . .

ALIGURH, *August* 1856.

I have never been so poor as I am at present. When I come to think, I almost despair of ever being able to go home. I could not live cheaper than I do now. I do not allow my bearer to spend a single anna. He used to run up bills in the most mysterious manner. The buttons and thread I have paid for would make up a complete outfit for a voyage round the world. I have nipped all that in the bud, and now keep my till in the tea-caddy. I have always plenty of small coin and coppers there, with which I pay cash for everything. I don't know how it is, but I am sometimes about a rupee out, and I fancy some one has a way of conjuring the pice[1] through the keyhole, as I am sure that it is impossible my accounts can be defective. . . . .

ALIGURH, *18th September* 1856.

. . . . . I have been much annoyed the last two days by finding that, whilst I was dining at the Colonel's the other night, some of the servants opened the tea-caddy, in which I keep a bag of rupees for current expenses, and stole fourteen rupees from it. I would not so much care if I could find out the thief, but there is no telling who is the culprit. . . . .

[1] Small coin.

ALIGURH, 24*th September* 1856.

. . . . . All my hopes of promotion have been knocked on the head by the news received with the present mail. The telegraphic message says that one captain and one lieutenant are to be added to each corps. No new corps are to be raised. . . . .

ALIGURH, 9*th October* 1856.

The *Friend of India* has just come in, and says that the Court of Directors have ordered messes to be compulsory in all regiments of the Bengal army. I am not at all sorry for this, as gentlemen, when they squabble or lose their tempers, will not now have the power to withdraw from the mess. I am so glad that all those who objected to join formerly will now be compelled to join, whether they like it or not. It will also bring the officers together again, and very likely make those who would otherwise be averse to doing it, make up their differences. . . . .

We were disappointed this morning at not getting the telegram announcing the arrival of the mail. I got one telegram, but it contained merely some news about the Persian expedition. A force is now being equipped at Bombay for that country. As troops from this Presidency have not been called for, we take little or no interest in the proceedings. I hear that some assistance is to be given to Dost Mahomed,[1] but no troops are to be sent into Afghanistan; we are only to supply him with arms, and perhaps money. As the Persians have attacked Herat, our Government are determined they shall not take the place, and if they ever succeed in capturing the city, we will send the troops into the island of Karrack in the Persian Gulf, and force the Shah to withdraw his men. . . . .

[1] The Amir of Afghanistan.

ALIGURH, *8th November* 1856.

. . . . . .

The electric telegraph message of the mail of the 9th October has just come in. The intelligence is not very satisfactory; everywhere in Europe there appears to be a state of panic and uneasiness. In this country war was declared against Persia yesterday, and a force will leave Bombay to attack Bushire and Karrack in the Persian Gulf on the 12th of this month. The cause of the war is ostensibly the attack on Herat by the Persians in direct opposition to the terms of a treaty entered into in 1853 by our Government and that country. People think that there is a chance of a force being sent into Afghanistan, but it is (I think) not probable. We had quite enough of interference with the affairs of that country fifteen years ago. . . . .

ALIGURH, *25th December* 1856.

. . . . . The mess was set a-going on the 15th of this month. The Colonel invited all the ladies of the regiment, and several others were asked, so that we had a jolly party, with no end of dances after dinner. We made the old Colonel dance, a thing he hadn't done for twenty years and more. We have a first-rate *khansamah*[1] and cook in the mess. All the ladies said they had never seen a dinner so well put on the table, and so well cooked. We have only five members at present, but when the companies[2] return in February, we shall sit down daily about eleven or twelve members, and perhaps two or three honorary ones besides. Altogether, it will be very jolly. We are going to give a dinner and dance to the whole station on New Year's Day or Twelfth Night. . . . .

I wish 1857 were as nearly ended as 1856, as about this time I shall be sending in my application for furlough. Won't it be jolly when the time arrives? I thought when

[1] Butler.

[2] *I.e.* the companies on detachment at out-stations.

you went away that two years would never pass over. I really don't know what I am writing about! I am at this moment translating with the Munshi a long general order, which I have to read to the corps, and consequently my ideas are a little confused; but I have no time to spare for *writing only;* I must do two things at once, or my work would never be done. . . . .

The following extract gives a peep into Stewart's life as a boy in Aberdeen, of which very few traces are now discoverable.

ALIGURH, *8th January* 1857.

. . . . . I was much amused with your account of —— and her landlady. I wish I could have witnessed their parting. I am sure there was a jolly blow-up! I have very vivid recollections of what used to take place when I was returning home from college. Our landlady used invariably to bring in a bill for breakages which never occurred, or, at all events, were not caused by us lodgers. This ended in a regular shindy, during which we used to beat a retreat. . . . .

ALIGURH, *6th February* 1857.

. . . . . This morning I returned from leave. We went out on the 4th to Dureeapore, about 20 miles from this, where we had some capital shooting. I was very unlucky, that is to say, I was shooting badly. I killed a black buck, and wounded some others, but I only got the one I first shot. The second day we went from camp to a Raja's, a friend of Money's, and spent the day walking about his gardens. In the evening he gave us a grand dinner; his *pillaos* were first-rate, but his servants evidently knew little of putting the things on the table. We had about twenty dishes, but some of them were not extensive, as the poor people were reduced at last to saucers, in which the curries were served. After dinner the Raja insisted on our witnessing fireworks and a Nautch, which had been got

up in honour of Money. The former were very fair, but of all the women I ever saw, the Nautch girls were the ugliest. The Raja's son told me in confidence that the girls were very bad, and could neither sing nor dance. I was much amused at the illumination of the rooms. There were no less than nine or ten lamps on the mantelpiece, and no two of them alike. Round the room the variety of wall-shades was very pleasing: some plain, some rose-coloured, others of ground glass and figured, and each adorned with a bird-cage, in which, by the way, was some rare bird. The Raja is a very good-natured old man, and is very kind at times in laying horses for us when we are travelling anywhere near his property. He sent us in his own carriage 20 miles this morning; indeed, he came with us himself for the first stage. . . . .

CHAPTER III

THE MUTINY AT ALIGURH

It is strange that in no letter which has survived does Donald Stewart indicate that he had any foreboding of the tremendous upheaval which was to take place in India during the fateful year 1857. Since the march of his regiment from Peshawur, the life of the quarter-master had been uneventful. The usual routine of drill and parades went on—and social life in a small, dull, up-country station continued quiet and same from day to day. We find no mention of the flashes of unrest amongst troops in lower Bengal which presaged the coming storm; but in the chain of letters are many missing links, especially during the early months of 1857—and those links may possibly have contained the notes of alarm for which search has been fruitless. However that may be, when the great mutiny broke out, Stewart found himself nearly in the centre of the storm.

Aligurh lies about 80 miles S.E. from Delhi, and 55 N.E. from Agra. A detachment of the regiment was at Bulundshahr—40 miles to the north of Aligurh; another at Etawah, 70 miles south-east of Agra; and a third at Mainpuri, between Futehgurh and Etawah.

The 9th Native Infantry was famous for its discipline. The officers were popular, and the men hitherto had given no sign of disloyalty. For some days after the outbreak at Meerut, it was hoped that, notwithstanding the neighbouring contagion, the regiment would stand fast to its allegiance. The native officers were profuse in protestations of loyalty. They arrested and disarmed several rebel Sepoys who were making off for their homes, and they handed up to the authorities a regimental pundit, who had been tampering with the regiment's loyalty. He was tried by a court-martial of Europeans and natives, convicted, and on 20th May hanged.

Stewart, as interpreter, was ordered to explain the sentence to the troops. As he spoke, a man shouted something, which no one was willing, when called upon, to repeat. There was, at the moment, no other indication of disloyalty. As the regiment marched back to quarters, however, the Sepoys began to realise that the man had been a martyr to their religion, and the flame of insurrection, once alight, spread rapidly. The excitement grew, and before night there was open mutiny. The mutineers inflicted no injury on their officers, but they plundered the treasury, released the prisoners from the jail, and went off to Delhi. The bad example of Aligurh was speedily followed by the detachments at Etawah, Mainpuri, and Bulundshahr. At Mainpuri the treasury was saved by the signal gallantry of Lieutenant de Kantzow. At Etawah the detachment plundered the treasury, released the prisoners, and created a panic, till order was restored by the arrival of a regiment of the Gwalior

contingent—itself destined, a little later, to go over to the side of rebellion.

Captain Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

ALIGURH, 14*th May* 1857.

. . . . . You will hear all sorts of rumours before you get this letter, and though matters in this place are as bad as they well can be, yet you must place no faith in what is not authenticated by the most respectable papers at home. It is impossible to tell you what I myself believe, as we have no authentic information from either Meerut or Delhi. However, this would appear to be the truth. On the 10th inst. the troopers of the 3rd Cavalry at Meerut, who refused to use their cartridges on parade, were tried and sentenced to imprisonment, with hard labour, for five and ten years. On the night of the 11th,[1] the whole of the Cavalry rose and released their comrades from jail, and let loose all the other prisoners, amounting, it is said, to about 2000. All the native troops at Meerut (11th and 20th Native Infantry) joined the Cavalry in the mutiny, and many lives have been lost. The Europeans are masters of the field there; but the native corps have gone off to Delhi, where there is not a single European soldier. They have seized the bridge of boats, and completely interrupted the communications. We cannot hear what the native corps at Delhi have done, but I fear they have joined the mutineers. What may have become of the European officers, God knows. The magistrate has sent off spies with letters, begging for information; but none have as yet returned. I believe a large body of these men have gone down towards Agra, for what purpose no one knows. A message was received a few hours ago, that the whole of the troops at Agra had been ordered out to meet the insurgents, and that the ladies were preparing to go to the Fort. Altogether, it is

[1] There seems to be a mistake about these dates, as no fact in the mutiny is more certain than that the outbreak at Meerut took place on the afternoon of Sunday, the 10th May.

the most serious outbreak that has ever occurred in India, and it is impossible to see the end of it. I am thankful to say that the 9th has as yet behaved splendidly; but what they would do in the event of an overpowering force of their mutinous brethren appearing among them, I know not. I feel confident, however, that they will not, under any circumstances, allow the Europeans to be maltreated. The mutinous regiments have been joined by all the disaffected scoundrels in this part of India, whose sole aim is plunder and rapine. I shall not mention any of the reports that I hear of the doings of these people, as everything has been so much exaggerated that the truth has been entirely lost sight of. When such a good corps as the 20th Native Infantry mutinies bodily, and marches off for their own purposes, what faith can be placed in the native army? Their doing so, in the face of the European force at Meerut, shows that their feelings have been roused to such an extent that they now place no credit in the Government's disavowal of any wish to interfere with their religious feelings. All our efforts are turned towards keeping our men from having intercourse with the mutineers. Some have already been in the lines, but I am happy to say that their friends have only fed them and turned them out again. I hear so many unfavourable reports regarding the state of the road between this and Agra, that I must finish this at once. I hope to have better news to send you soon. . . . . I have just seen two Magazine "klassies,"[1] who were in charge of ten cart-loads of Government stores. The mutineers burned the stores before their eyes, and took away the carts. They, at the same time, set fire to the Dak Bungalow.[2] This was at the Iron Suspension Bridge near Delhi. They broke into the tehsildar's[3] treasury there, and plundered it. . . . . I am sorry to say we are still without intelligence from Delhi and Meerut. I am very busy with official work,

[1] Tent-pitchers.
[2] Travellers' rest-house.
[3] Native deputy collector of revenue.

as I have to make constant reports of the state of affairs. God grant that I may soon have it in my power to write that this state of matters is at an end. . . .

Your most devotedly attached husband,

D. M. STEWART.

Captain Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

ALIGURH, 15*th May* 1857.

Since I posted my letter yesterday, I have heard that one of the Native Infantry corps at Delhi (the 38th), fraternised with the mutineers, and that Mr Fraser, the Commissioner, Captain Douglas, Commandant of the Palace Guards, and poor Miss Jennings, the Padre's daughter, had been murdered. This intelligence had been sent to the Lieutenant-Governor by the King of Delhi. Some Sepoys who passed through Delhi on Monday last, going down country on leave, told us here this morning that they saw an officer killed by the townspeople of Delhi. They said that they (the Sepoys) asked him to stay near them in the post-office compound, but that he would not, as he wished to join some other officers who were collected near the Magazine, and as he ran along, the people attacked and killed him. I believe many Sepoys saw this, but did not interfere. None of the messengers sent from this have yet returned, so that the letter of the King of Delhi is the only *pukka*[1] news we have as yet been able to obtain. From Meerut we hear that Mr Tregear, the Inspector of Public Instruction, was killed on the first outbreak there. His house was near the jail. A Mrs Courtenay and her niece were literally cut to pieces. I believe the old lady kept an hotel at Meerut. This is all we have heard as yet from that quarter. You will excuse me, I know, for writing so much on this all-absorbing question; but as our thoughts are always on this point, everything we do or say has reference to it. It is a most anxious time for every one in this part of

[1] Certain.

India, as we know not the moment when we may be actors in the drama that is now being performed in our neighbourhood. So long, however, as our men remain staunch, and stand by us, there will be nothing to fear. I wish that all the ladies—in fact all the European women —were out of the place. They will be a sad drag on us in the event of an outbreak here, but we do not like to send them away till the last, as we wish to show the natives that we have full confidence in our own strength. I am indeed thankful that you are out of harm's way. Little do we know what is good for us. We grumbled because we were not left at Meerut, and we grumbled at being forced to part for a time, yet both contingencies have, as far as one can, humanly speaking, see, been to our benefit. It only proves that we ought to be thankful to the Giver of all mercies in whatever situation we are placed. I am happy to say that as yet the disaffection is entirely confined to Meerut and Delhi; even at the latter station it is reported that one of the corps has refused to join the mutineers, though it will not fight against them just now, but I daresay when Europeans arrive, they will join them in putting down the mutinous corps. Eld[1] has just been here, and read out to us Mr Greathed, the Commissioner of Meerut's, account of events as they occurred there. The 20th Native Infantry first rose and shot down Colonel Finnis of the 11th, Captains Taylor and Macdonald, and Mr Henderson of the 20th. Mr Humphreys was saved by being concealed by one of his own Sepoys. Mrs Macdonald and Mrs Chambers of the 11th, who were driving in a buggy, were also barbarously murdered. Several others were at the same time killed. . . . . It makes one shudder to think of such horrible doings. I, till now, thought the Sepoys would not permit their officers to be butchered, but I have lost my faith in some measure, though the 11th Native Infantry protected their officers, and would not allow them to be killed. Mr Greathed says he does not think there is a

[1] The officer commanding the 9th Native Infantry.

living European at Delhi. Three or four officers and their wives escaped to Meerut, and it is their opinion that all the others have been killed. Lieutenant Willoughby of the Artillery blew up the Magazine at Delhi, and it is supposed that he sacrificed his own life[1] at the same time, in order that the mutineers should be deprived of the ammunition and stores; a most noble act of self-sacrifice and devotion to his country. . . . .

On 24th May Donald Stewart writes to a friend describing the mutiny of the 9th Native Infantry. He dates from Hattras, some few miles to the south of Aligurh, where fourteen European officers of the mutinied regiments were waiting, with a detachment of Gwalior Cavalry, till they were strong enough to return to Aligurh. Stewart, it will be seen, shared the general belief that Delhi would be taken in a few days.

CAMP HATTRAS, *24th May* 1857.

I daresay that you will have heard, before you receive this, that my regiment mutinied on the 20th inst., and we were obliged to run for our lives. The immediate cause was the hanging of a Brahmin, who had been tampering with the fidelity of the corps. As soon as the man was taken from the gallows his friends took his body to the lines, and upbraided the men with the murder of one of their own priests. Our houses were plundered and burnt, and we had only time to make arrangements for the flight of the civilians and their families. The men plundered the treasury and marched off to Delhi, where they expected to join the other mutinous regiments. The detachment at Mainpuri, on hearing of events at Aligurh, seized the treasury and joined their comrades at Headquarters, or, rather, proceeded in that direction; whether they have joined

[1] He escaped to Meerut, but died there from his injuries.

them yet or not, I cannot say. I, myself, am quite ruined, and shall now be unable to dream of going home. I thank God that Marina and the children were not with me; I could hardly have expected to save all their lives, as the mutiny took place at the time they would all have been out for their evening drive. The civilians, fortunately, had their carriages and buggies ready for their evening drive, so that they stepped into them, and we covered their retreat into Agra. There are now fourteen European officers here, with about two hundred of Scindiah's Horse. We are going to return to Aligurh as soon as arrangements can be made for completing our detachment to the required strength. But the Government are in a measure helpless. Till the mutinous regiments are exterminated, little can be done to put down the excesses that are now being carried on throughout this part of the country. The Commander-in-Chief is expected at Delhi this day with a large European force, and we hope by to-morrow to hear that all has been satisfactorily settled. Everything depends upon the success of this attack. The very day the mutiny broke out in the 9th Native Infantry I wrote to Marina, telling her that all was quiet, and the regiment faithful. A good deal depends on the promptitude with which European troops are sent out from England. If more native corps give way, we must make up our minds to give up some districts for a time; but retribution must ultimately fall upon those who have failed us in the time of our need. We are in a miserable state here, as far as creature comforts go. I have the suit of clothes I left parade in on the 20th, my sword, and a horse; and that is the whole of my worldly goods. I have no servants, so I have to groom and feed my horse myself, not a very pleasant occupation, with the thermometer at 100 under a tree. The Lieutenant-Governor, North-West Provinces, has most kindly offered to make a collection of clothes for us among the European residents at Agra; and, when they come, we hope to enjoy ourselves with a change of garments. As I may not be able to write home about the time the mail leaves, perhaps you will kindly send this to

Marina. I hope the Madras troops are keeping quiet. They cannot have the same cause of complaint that our troops brought forward, viz. fear of losing their caste. It is a very groundless one, but the Government have entirely failed in their endeavours to eradicate it. I have spoken to all classes of natives on the subject, and, though many individuals have professed that they were personally satisfied of the intentions of Government, they knew that there were doubts existing in the minds of the army and population, which nothing apparently could appease.

The stay at Hattras was cut short by a mutiny of part of the Gwalior escort. The fugitive officers escaped into Agra, raised a small body of volunteers, with Stewart and Greathed as officers. With this force they made their way back to Aligurh, whence Stewart writes to his wife on the 29th May.

Captain Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

ALIGURH, *29th May* 1857.

I fancy you will have seen in the public papers that the very day I last wrote to you, namely the 20th,[1] the 9th mutinied, and we were all obliged to bolt towards Agra, leaving everything we possessed in the world to plunder. The hardships we have undergone since that day I can hardly describe. We left parade about sunset, the time the corps broke out into mutiny, and the uniform on our backs was all we saved of our property. We dared not return to our bungalows, as the Sepoys there would have murdered us. The pay-havildar of the 9th company—why, I know not—gave out that he would shoot me if he had an opportunity. 'This sad blow has ruined me, and I shall now be unable to go home, even were I permitted to do so by Government. The whole native army has, I may say,

[1] No trace of the letter of the 20th May can be found. It may have been lost or destroyed in transit.

revolted, and the country is in a fearful state. We hold Aligurh with forty Europeans, raised among the clerks in the offices at Agra. I and Greathed of the Engineers, are the only officers with them. We have been engaged this morning in trying to recover some of our plundered property. I have recovered my new gun, a mare, and a small bundle of cold-weather clothes; but my uniform, plate, and everything else, is gone. Rs.5000 would not cover my losses. A great deal of money in my charge, was taken by the Sepoys, and drafts, to the extent of Rs.2000, were burnt with my house; but I will try and give you some sort of connected account of the affair.

On the 19th, a Brahmin of a neighbouring village was caught by the men tampering with their fidelity to Government. He was, the following day, tried by us, and hanged in the evening about 5.30. The regiment was drawn up, to prevent any outbreak of the city people; and I was ordered to explain to the men why they were there. The men were, after the execution, marched back to the lines and dismissed; and we were all saying how fortunate we were that things had passed off so quietly. The words were hardly out of my mouth when I heard that in the Rifle Company there was a row. I turned round, and saw a Brahmin Sepoy rush out, followed by his comrades, and crying out: "You have murdered our priest, hang me—hang me." He tore off his uniform and arms, and rushed up to us, shouting: "Hang me—hang me!. You have hanged a Brahmin," etc. At first we thought we should be able to put the matter down, and we went among the men; but, gradually, they all got excited, and some of them told us to move off the parade, and that they would settle the mutineers. The men began to load their muskets; so we—five in all—walked quietly away, without taking any notice of the men, who were, by this time, in a frightful state. As some Irregular Cavalry had come into the station that morning, we proceeded to join them; and, as soon as I got out of sight of the Sepoys, I cantered off to collect all the married people and Christians in the station. Luckily, the civilians were on the point of going out for their evening drive, and

had their carriages ready for the purpose. The Dumergues went into their carriage, leaving everything they had, even their watches on the table. Ten minutes afterwards, the whole of the men in the lines proceeded to the treasury, which they plundered to the amount of 500,000 rupees, and then marched off to join the other mutinous corps at Delhi. The city people and villagers, plundered and burnt down our houses; and the following morning there was not an anna's worth of private property in the station. The ladies and children went straight into Agra, and we encamped at Hattras, 21 miles from Aligurh. Whilst we were there, an outbreak took place among our escort, the first Gwalior Irregular Cavalry. Half the corps mutinied when we were in an upstairs room eating our dinner, and marched quietly out of camp. At first we thought they would fight, and we were prepared for them. We should have held out for a short time, but must ultimately have been killed, as we had no means of escape. Without finishing dinner, however, we and what remained of the Cavalry, packed up and marched off towards Agra. You must know that all this time I had no servant; so I had to groom and feed my horse, hunt about in the bazaar for gram[1] and grass, and buy a bucket of water whenever I could get it—very pleasant sort of work in May. In this state I remained for seven days, till we came in here yesterday morning, when several of the servants made their appearance.

They say that, when they were packing up several things to carry off, the villagers came and drove them off. I have got more back than any one in the corps, so that I may consider myself lucky. I am so sorry I did not sell my silver long ago; but who thought an outbreak of this sort would ever occur? Our detachments at Etawah, Mainpuri, and Bulundshahr all mutinied, and, at the latter place, plundered the treasury. All over the country the native regiments have mutinied. At Ferozepore one corps laid down their arms, but the other fought, and was cut to

[1] Vetch pea.

pieces by the Europeans and the 10th Cavalry. At Meean Mir all three native corps were disarmed. The 16th, 26th, and 49th are the regiments there. The Gurkha corps at Jutog[1] has mutinied and seized the bank at Simla, and all the ladies have bolted.[2] At Barrackpore the three corps there are in a state of mutiny; they are only overawed by the Europeans. The feeling exists in every branch of the Service—no native can now be trusted. Where it will end, God knows! . . . What Government are going to do with us I know not. I fancy we shall all be converted into European corps, and no native corps will ever be stationed alone again. About ten of the mutinous corps are collected at Delhi, where they have set up an Emperor; and the Commander-in-Chief, with all the Europeans he can collect, is going to attack them about the 8th proxo. Till he has utterly exterminated these wretches, we shall be unable to do anything to assist the poor people of the country, who are at the mercy of every ruffian who chooses to rob and murder them. I cannot tell you the enormous sacrifice of property that has occurred here. . . . . I hope that the country will be settled by the cold weather, and that you will be able to join me with safety. As it is, I am so thankful that you were not here when the mutiny took place. We should have been living in a place where we could not possibly have escaped with our lives. Some of the European clerks and their families fell into the hands of the villagers, who killed two of them, and stripped the remainder, and drove them—eighteen in number—along the public roads, till they were rescued by a banker of Sasnee, who sent 300 men to rescue them. We are going to apply to Government for a dress of honour for him, and a handsome present for his humanity. The poor women were in a frightful state, as the natives threatened to murder the men and take them off to their

[1] A hill station near Simla.

[2] Some of the reports which reached Stewart were exaggerated, such as the alleged destruction of a native regiment at Ferozepore, and the plunder of the Simla bank.

villages. Every officer who is able is sending his family out of the country. Several people who were supposed to have been killed at Delhi, have, I am happy to say, escaped. I must tell you that the people at Agra were very kind to us all when we were in tribulation. Our great difficulty was want of syces to look after our horses, on whose state our lives depended. For about seven days we were not in bed one night. . . . .

The volunteers were not able to hold Aligurh for many days. Early in June a mutineer force from Lucknow drove them out and took possession of the place. Captain Stewart's next letter is dated from the neighbourhood of Aligurh. He has, it will be seen, conceived the project of a bold dash for Delhi.

Captain Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

NEAR ALIGURH, *9th June* 1857.

We were obliged to evacuate Aligurh the night before last, as a large force of mutineers, consisting of the 7th Cavalry, Norman Martin's[1] corps, and part of the 48th and 71st Native Infantry, all from Lucknow, marched into the station and drove us out. I forget whether I mentioned in my last that I was in command of the Agra volunteers, some thirty-five in number, and that we alone were holding the district and keeping it in order. I will now tell you how matters are going in India. We have had several scrimmages with the people of the district. The state of the Bengal Presidency is such as no Anglo-Saxon has ever seen. The whole native army has, with the exception of one or two corps, either mutinied or been disarmed. Some have murdered their officers; others have let them off. The only places where natives are doing duty are Barrackpore, Dinapore, Allahabad, and one or two places

[1] A cousin.

in Bengal. We are anxiously looking out for aid from England. No native troops can now be trusted, as the men of all arms have mutinied alike. God knows where it will end; all we want is a re-inforcement of 20,000 Europeans, and we shall teach the natives of India that they have made a sad mistake in their late doings. A good deal of blame must rest with the Court of Directors and British Government, who have left the country denuded of European troops. . . . . We can hear nothing of what is doing below Cawnpore; I hope they are all quiet. We here are hunted about from place to place. We are in Aligurh one day, and the next we are bolting into the country.

14*th June*.—I am just going into Agra in the mail-cart for the purpose of getting a first-rate horse that will be able to carry me at one stretch from this to Delhi. There has been no regular intelligence from Delhi for some time, and I have volunteered to go alone and carry despatches to the Commander-in-Chief from the Lieutenant-Governor. It is a service of danger, but, should I succeed, I might do good work for the State.

AGRA, 10 P.M.

I went first to the Lieutenant-Governor's; he has asked me to go to Delhi by the south bank of the Jumna. I don't know the road as well as I do the other side, but I fancy I must do my best. . . . . You must not be alarmed at all this, but trust in God, who has us all in His keeping. I am very tired, and must now go to bed, as I have a ride of 100 miles in a broiling sun to look forward to to-morrow.

P.S.—All the overland letters are in, but *none for me*. It would have been a comfort to me to have got one before leaving for Delhi.

CHAPTER IV

THE RIDE TO DELHI

By this time the situation at Agra had become extremely grave. The surrounding districts were, to use Mr Colvin the Lieutenant-Governor's words, "in a blaze of riot and carnage." As tidings arrived of each new outbreak of mutiny, the alarm of the European community intensified. On 21st May had come the news of the outbreak at Aligurh, and, a day or two later, of the mutinies at Bulundshahr, Etawah and Mainpuri. At the close of the month the garrison at Muttra, 30 miles up the river, joined the rebel cause, plundered the treasury, opened the jails, and went off to Delhi. The troops of the Raja of Bhurtpore soon followed their example. Early in June, the Gwalior contingent, 2 regiments of Cavalry, 7 of Infantry, and several batteries of artillery—in all some 8000 men, broke into mutiny, murdered the European officers, besides sergeants, ladies and children, and added seriously to the danger of the situation. The Lieutenant-Governor, reluctant to do anything that would indicate panic, had been obliged to disarm the native regiments, and was preparing, when the necessity arose, to bring the European inhabitants at Agra within the walls of the Fort. "The country north of Meerut," he wrote, "is at the mercy of the most daring and

criminal. I wield but the merest shadow of Government." The anxieties of his position had been enhanced by the isolation in which he found himself. Communication with the Commander-in-Chief had become impossible. "We have had nothing," he writes on 25th May, "from Meerut for a week. The difficulty of getting messages is inconceivable." On the 29th he tells Lord Canning "Not a line has reached me from the Commander-in-Chief since the beginning of the disturbances. The reason why messages are not delivered is that the belief in our power is shaken, and men will not run the risk of detection." At such a moment the arrival of a volunteer, burning to be sent to Delhi, and ready, on his own responsibility, to face a danger too grave for an official order, was, it may be imagined, felt to be opportune. The Lieutenant-Governor made no secret of his opinion that the enterprise was one of much hazard, and that the young volunteer took his fate in his hands. Stewart's interview with the Lieutenant-Governor and the adventurous ride, in which it resulted, are best described in his own words, written a few years ago.

Narrative of the Ride to Delhi.

AFTER the mutiny of the 9th Native Infantry at Aligurh, on the 20th May 1857, I attached myself to Mr Watson, the Collector of the district, who moved to Hattras under the protection of the 1st Cavalry of the Gwalior contingent, commanded by Captain Alexander. This regiment had been sent to Aligurh by Mr Colvin, the Lieutenant-Governor, North-Western Provinces, for the purpose of giving support to the 9th Native Infantry, which, till the day it mutinied, had been doing good

work in arresting and disarming the mutineers from Meerut and Delhi, who were moving in considerable numbers towards their homes in Oudh and the adjoining district. It is not necessary here to detail the circumstances under which the 9th Native Infantry mutinied; but I have long held the opinion that the senior and responsible officers (Colonel Eld and myself) might have staved off the catastrophe, and perhaps saved the regiment, if we had been less ready to notice the treasonable acts of the acting regimental pundit, whose condemnation to death, by sentence of a mixed court of European and Native officers, led directly to the mutiny of the regiment. The proceedings of the trial were commenced and carried out under the sanction of the Lieutenant-Governor. A day or two after the mutinous troops had moved on to Delhi, with the contents of the Government treasury, the station of Aligurh was re-occupied by the Collector, who had at his disposal a small body of volunteers, raised at Agra. Mr Watson was thus enabled to maintain his authority over the town of Aligurh, and, to some extent, over the whole of his district for some weeks. These Agra volunteers did valuable service at that time, and many of them subsequently lost their lives in action. After Major Greathed, R.E., their first commandant, proceeded to Meerut, the volunteers selected me as their commandant, and I remained at their head for some weeks. I found, after a time, that I was unable to submit to the conditions under which I was placed, by circumstances over which I had no real control. Watson and I did not get on very well officially, though he was a personal friend and a very plucky fellow, and I made up my mind to relinquish my post, and to find my way to the army then before Delhi. When I mentioned my resolve to Mr Watson, he at once communicated with the Lieutenant-Governor, who invited me to visit him at Agra. I do not remember the date, but I think it must have been about the 15th June[1] that I met the Lieutenant-Governor, Mr Colvin, who was then

[1] It was on the 14th June. See p. 46 *supra*.

at the Government House, Agra. He informed me that he had a packet of despatches from the Government of India for the Commander-in-Chief, who was understood at the time to be with the army before Delhi, and that it would be a public service if I would take charge of them. We discussed my plan of operation in the presence of Sir William Muir, Captain Nixon of the Bombay Army, and, I think, one or two others. My own idea was to try and get to Meerut *viâ* Khoorja and Bulundshahr. It was known that parties of the rebels were in occupation of Khoorja and the roads leading from that place, but I thought I could find my way to Meerut by going across country and avoiding the main roads. Mr Colvin and the others present said they did not wish to influence my plans, but they thought that if I went *viâ* Muttra they could to some extent ensure my safety as far as Hodul, and that I should find a large body of Jeypur troops encamped in the vicinity of Pulwul, in the Goorgaon district. On a full consideration of the case I determined to act on Mr Colvin's suggestion, and said that I was ready to start at once, if they could provide me with a horse, as my own was at Aligurh, and could not be brought over under forty-eight hours. Captain Nixon offered to provide a horse. I bought a saddle and bridle from a friend in cantonments, and made a start from Government House with my despatches at dusk. On the 18th June,[1] before I left, the Lieutenant-Governor impressed on me that I was not going under his order, or indeed by the order of any official superior; that my proceedings were of a voluntary character; and that the Government would not be responsible for the consequences. I fully admitted that my purpose was to get to the army before Delhi, that I was at the time under no one's orders, and that the responsibility for what I had undertaken rested upon myself, and upon no one else. Upon this understanding the Government despatches were placed in my hands, and I proceeded on my way. The Lieutenant-Governor gave me an intro-

[1] The date was the 17th June. See p. 53 *infra*.

duction to a native in the city of Muttra, to the tehsildar of Kosi, and to Captain Eden, the Resident of Jeypur, at that time with the Jeypur troops near Pulwul. Mr Colvin was at the time in good spirits, and seemed to me to look at the difficulties before him with a degree of calmness and courage, which was not very common at that time. I attribute much of the success of my proceedings to his suggestions and advice. For the first 10 miles of my ride to Muttra I met no sort of difficulty, and only now and then saw a human being; but after that I was compelled to go occasionally at speed, because I came upon straggling bodies of armed men, all going in the direction of Delhi. The night was dark, and, as I galloped along as fast as my nag would carry me, the men made way for me. They were probably as much surprised as I was; but I had no time for thought. I had committed myself to a particular course, and in about three hours' time I found myself at Muttra. I rode through the streets at a foot pace, occasionally asking my way to the house of the native, who was to put me up for the night. It was a singular sight. The town was well lighted and full of people, many of them armed. They did not take very much notice of me, and one of the bystanders volunteered to show me the house where I was to rest for the night. My host was a Brahmin, and held some official position, but what it was I do not recollect. It was quite clear, however, that I was an unwelcome guest, and he seemed well pleased when I told him I intended to resume my journey an hour or so before daybreak. When on the point of starting, I discovered that the mare had cast a shoe. I had to send for a blacksmith to replace the lost shoe, and it was daybreak before I got clear of the town. My host supplied me with two sowars belonging to the Bhurtpore Raj, who were to show me the road and escort me as far as Hodul. When I first saw these cut-throat-looking men I was inclined to dispense with their services; but, as that would be a sign of distrust, I made the best of it, and accepted their escort with apparent gratitude. Indeed, without these men I should have been

unable to find my way, as the roads were not very well defined. When I had ridden about 15 or 16 miles, my mare fell from exhaustion and rolled me in the dust. I could not get her to move, and I left her for dead. When this occurred my two sowars turned back, leaving me, with shouts of laughter, prone on the ground. The sight was, no doubt, a comical one. On the whole, I was not sorry to get rid of my ostensible friends, though I was left alone with—as I then thought—my dead horse. It has nothing to do with my story, but the mare eventually recovered, and was, some months subsequently, restored to her owner, Captain Nixon, at Agra. I removed the saddle and bridle, and walked to the nearest village, where I endeavoured to hire a pony. No one would have anything to say to me, and I had to seize a donkey, which was feeding hard by, and, so mounted, I proceeded on my journey. There was a good deal of excitement in the country, and the poor people were more concerned in protecting themselves and their property from robbers, who were going about in gangs, than in doing an injury to a solitary traveller like myself. About sunset I reached Hodul, and found the tehsil[1] at once. The tehsildar was very civil, prepared some bread and milk for me, but would not hear of my staying the night. He said that there was much excitement in the town about me, and that he would not be responsible for my safety. I was very tired and exhausted, but I explained that I could not move on without a horse. He promptly offered his own pony, and, as soon as it was quite dark, I made a fresh start for the Jeypur camp. On leaving Hodul I went back in the direction of Muttra for a mile or two; and, after satisfying myself that I was not followed, I cut across country to the railway embankment,[2] which I knew went in a direct line towards Delhi. Moving along at a foot's pace at the foot of the embankment, it was very unlikely that I should meet with travellers of any sort. As a matter of fact, I met no one, and when the

[1] The head quarters of a tehsildar or native sub-collector of revenue.

[2] The railway, of course, was only under construction at this time.

Muttra—Evening. [*To face p.* 52.

day broke I made for the road, and reached the Jeypur camp about breakfast time. I was very hospitably received by Captain Eden, the political agent at Jeypur, who introduced me to the Jeypur Wuzeer.[1] The minister, who was also Commander-in-Chief of the Jeypur army, at once promised to give me a small escort as far as the British camp at Delhi, in compliance with the request made to him by the Lieutenant-Governor. The minister was a very pious Mahomedan, and seemed really anxious to fulfil his promise; but on various pretexts he put me off from day to day for about a week. It thus dawned upon me that he either could not, or would not, give me any sort of escort.

It is neecssary to pause here in order to give extracts from two old letters, which have very recently been found, the existence of which Sir Donald Stewart had probably forgotten when he was writing his narrative of the "Ride." He appears to have remained about a week in the Jeypur camp, and to have marched with it from Pulwul back to Hodul.

Captain Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

CAMP PULWUL (*about* 35 *miles south of Delhi*),
19*th June* 1857.

Just as I was leaving Government House on the 17th I heard that the troops at Gwalior had revolted and cut off our communication with Bombay. . . . . I ought to have started for Delhi yesterday, but the escort disappointed me. I, however, start this afternoon at four, and hope to be in Delhi before this time to-morrow. I rode one horse from Agra 60 miles, when she fell down, and, as I thought, was about to die. However, she, after some time, got up and crawled to a village, where I left her. I came on here upon a tattoo I borrowed from a native, but I am happy

[1] Prime Minister.

to say I have got a very decent nag to take me into Delhi. I shall endeavour to remain at Delhi till the place is stormed and taken, which I hope will take place in a day or two, as the delay is most detrimental to the country. A railway engineer has offered to accompany me into Delhi, and we have an escort of sixty sowars. These men won't fight, I fear, but their formidable appearance should, I think, keep us from much harm, but in any case I am determined that we shall go into Delhi somehow. . . . .

Captain Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

CAMP HODUL (50 *miles from Delhi*),
26th June 1857.

Since I last wrote to you, we have retrograded about 20 miles. I have been dreadfully disappointed in not getting an escort to Delhi. Captain Eden, the Political Agent with the Jeypur troops, for several days buoyed me up with the hopes of getting sufficient men to take me to the Chief's camp, but at the last moment they always failed us. One hundred and fifty sowars refused to escort me, because they said the party was not strong enough; in fact, they are a set of arrant cowards. I would willingly make the attempt with ten horsemen, but it would now be hopeless to expect any assistance from them. I would not mind it so much myself, but the Lieutenant-Governor fully expected that I should be able to force my way to Delhi, and may not probably think the want of a guide and escort a sufficient cause for my want of success. However, I told him before I left Agra that I had not been this road for fifteen years, and that I knew nothing about it, but that by Aligurh and Meerut I felt confident of succeeding. It is not of such importance now that we have managed to get intelligence pretty regularly through natives. They are getting on but slowly in the siege. Since the army arrived several officers have been killed, among others Quintin Battye of the Guides. . . . Since I left Agra I have not had a letter from any one, and I don't know what has

become of my horse, servants, and the little property I left with a native in the city of Aligurh. . . . I shall take the first opportunity of joining the army at Delhi, and in time I hope to be present at the final assault. They are at present going on very steadily but slowly. I fancy the Commander does not think he is strong enough for a *coup de main*, but with the enemy he has to deal with, I should say it would be the most politic move possible, as the natives throughout India cannot comprehend the cause of the delay, particularly as they know that Delhi is not what can be considered as a fortified town. It certainly has a wall and a ditch, but it is built on the native system of fortification, and quite incapable of withstanding a siege. Our sole want is numbers. The army before Delhi cannot muster 5000 bayonets, and the rebels inside the town must be between 25,000 and 30,000 men. They are a cowardly crew when brought face to face with our Europeans, but they continue their attacks on our position and prevent our batteries approaching the walls. Within the last few days, however, we have had reinforcements of 2000 English, which will admit of our breaching batteries being brought within effective distance of the walls. Once our men get into the town it will be all up with the mutineers, as the king's palace or fort is not capable of defence. . . . The whole country, as far as Bengal is concerned, is in a state of open rebellion, and some fifty regiments, regular and irregular, have mutinied. In fact, I only know of three or four corps in the army who have up to this time remained staunch, and even they cannot be depended on. I believe that English regiments have already been sent from home, and in the meantime what assistance was available has been given by Madras and Bombay, the native armies of which have as yet remained loyal, and I hope they will continue so. . . . .

I will now tell you something of our position here. There are only six of us left—Mr Harvey, Commissioner of Agra; Captain Eden, Political Agent, Jeypur; Mr Ford, C.S.; Lieutenant Jenkins of the 44th; and Lieutenant Goldsworthy of the 72nd N.I.; and your humble slave.

I have neither horse nor servant, and only one change of clothes, which I am obliged to wear whilst the other is at the wash. However, I am as jolly as possible; the heat, as you may imagine, in tents is something unique, but we never grumble. Our troops, as ragged a set as you ever cast eyes on, are not brave—but we are satisfied when they state their intention to remain with us. It requires all Captain Eden's tact to keep them together and prevent them returning to their own country. We are sadly off for everything in the shape of cutlery and crockery; we had some iron spoons made up by the village blacksmiths, but they confessed their inability to make forks or knives that would cut. What a luxury it will be to get into a house again and have a bed to sleep on. I shall never complain of India; after this exposure, any sort of a pig-sty will be considered a comfort in future . . . Some twenty-five ladies and their children came into Agra the other day with *nothing but sheets on them.* They escaped from Gwalior.

27th June.

. . . . . I have been promised an escort to Delhi to-day, but I put little faith in it, and will not believe it till I see the men mounted. I have myself collected a few, sowars of one of the Oudh Irregular Corps, and they are all anxious to go with me. I have confidence in them, and will gladly put myself in their hands. The only difficulty will be when we get within 10 miles of Delhi. The ground in the neighbourhood of the camp is difficult; hills, broken ravines, and gardens are very puzzling to me, ignorant of their bearings. . . . . The people in this part of the country are in great alarm regarding the Neemuch mutineers, who are on their way to Agra. . . . . These scoundrels are at liberty either to attack Agra or come this way to Delhi. Should they do the latter, Captain Eden's force, which is some six thousand strong, with eight guns, would be scattered to the winds, as they have no intention of opposing even the smallest number of our regular troops. Along with the Neemuch mutineers is Murray Mackenzie's troop

of Horse Artillery, one of the finest in the army; there are men in it who would fight against Europeans any day. These rascals have been committing all sorts of barbarities. . . . . I see that Hodson of the 1st Fusiliers has been distinguishing himself, and has got into the Quarter-Master-General's Department. I was certain that, had he an opportunity, he would come to the front again. . . . .

Narrative continued.

There were a number of English refugees in the Jeypur camp, viz.—Mr George Harvey, Commissioner of Agra; his two assistants, Lieutenant Goldsworthy of the Commissariat Department, and Captain Jenkins of the Commissariat Department (afterwards Manager of the Oudh and Rohilkund Railway); Mr W. Ford, Collector of Goorgaon; and two railway engineers, Messrs Michel and Le Mesurier. Mr Harvey did everything in his power to stop my attempt to get to Delhi; and, as there seemed to be no hope of getting the promised escort from the Jeypur minister, I persuaded Mr Ford to join me in an attempt to reach Delhi without an escort. I was particularly anxious to get Mr Ford's company, because he owned two very fine horses, and I knew he could not ride both at the same time! Our movements were accelerated by the mutiny of two or three of the Jeypur Poorbeah regiments, who marched off in a body from our camp to join the rebels at Delhi. Fortunately for the English officers in the Jeypur camp, the national troops of the Jeypur State remained staunch, and, I believe, continued so to the end. The Nagas and the Shekawati Thakoors converted themselves into a sort of bodyguard, and kept strict watch over the political agent's camp. The day after the mutiny of the Jeypur Poorbeah regiments, Mr Ford and I made a start for Delhi. We were accompanied by a Mr Kitchen, who was, I think, a salt patrol, Mir Mendi Zumma, a native officer of the 2nd Oudh Cavalry Regiment, which mutinied and murdered its

European officers, and a horseman belonging to the Jhujur state, who carried the longest lance I have ever seen as a weapon of war. We bade farewell to our kind host, Captain Eden, about 5 o'clock in the afternoon of, I think, the 23rd or 24th June 1857,[1] and arrived at the walled town of Pulwul at 9 or 10 P.M. We got quietly into the town with a string of Rewarri camels, which had gone down country with merchandise and were returning to Hansi or Hissar. Mr Ford at once sent for the kotwal,[2] who was one of his district officials, if I remember rightly, and asked for some food. The kotwal brought us bread and milk, but besought us to move on without delay, as there was a regiment of mutineer infantry in the town, and he could not be responsible for the consequences if the Sepoys got wind of our being in the place.

After taking some refreshment I strolled quietly in the direction of the place where the regiment were cooking their dinners, but I could not make out what they were, though I believe that it was one of the Gwalior Contingent Corps. The kotwal smuggled us out of the town quietly, and put us on the road to Goorgaon. During the night we were not molested, but in the early morning we were attacked by a gang of robbers, who evidently took us for native travellers. There was about a dozen of them ; one made for me, and I promptly brought my revolver to bear upon him. I don't think he was 10 yards from me, and yet I missed him clean. Fortunately for me, the Jhujur sowar with the long spear was behind me, and pinned my assailant neatly before he got within arm's length of me. Since that day I have not placed much faith in the revolver. On the fall of my antagonist the others took to their heels, and disappeared with magical rapidity. A short time after this we were somewhat dismayed at observing a large body of men, moving parallel to us, and

[1] The date must have been the 26th or 27th June (see last letter quoted, which was written at Hodul on the 26th, just before the start).

[2] Chief police officer.

evidently making for the same point as ourselves, a pass in the Mewattic hills, near the Begum Sumroo's old fort of Badshapore. These people evidently observed us about the same time, and three horsemen from the body came to overhaul us. When they came within 200 or 300 yards of us, they waved their pennons, and, shouting, "Deen—deen,"[1] made an attempt to charge us. Ford and I and our spearman went for them with a will, or apparent will, and they promptly turned tail and never looked behind them. When they were well on the run we turned and went on to our destination as fast as the men on foot (the syces)[2] could go. When we reached the pass, we found it lined on both sides with armed men, belonging to the neighbouring villages, who had turned out to protect themselves and their property from the mutineers, who were pouring from all quarters into Delhi. I forget the name of the village at this moment, but the people, who were mostly Hindus, were extremely civil to us. After the mutineers had passed on towards Delhi we moved into the little fort of Badshapore, where we rested comfortably during the heat of the day. Towards evening two or three dozen of the leading men of the place came to pay their respects to the collector (Ford), and asked if they could do anything for us. They gave us the opening we wanted, and Ford, who did not seem to know the district well himself, asked them to provide us with a guide who would take us to the camp before Delhi. Our friends were hardly prepared for this. They said they were men of peace, and could not possibly leave their village in times like these—that the country was very unsafe for travellers, and that we had better make a detour by daylight, and find our own way, etc., etc.

During this conversation a man from the crowd offered to guide us to the camp. We did not fancy his appearance, but he told us who he was, and we at once accepted his offer. The man then went away, promising to return in the evening. Shortly afterwards our village friends came back with all sorts of evil reports about our volunteer guide.

[1] "The Faith—the Faith." [2] Grooms.

They said the man, "Jumna Das," was a Chowdri of Goorgaon, a notorious cattle-lifter, and shrewdly suspected as the person who set fire to the collector's Cutcherry[1] at Goorgaon, in order that the evidence of his latest offence might be got rid of. Mr Ford seemed to have a hazy recollection of the man who had been *suspected* of cattle-lifting, but that was about all that was against him. We were further told that we were to be led into an ambush in the civil station of Goorgaon, and there shot, or otherwise got rid of. To this we replied, "Will any of you take his place as guide?" Their answer was a low salaam, and with that they disappeared in a body. We were not very happy about Jumna Das; but he turned up at the appointed time on horseback, and we started on our last night's ride. In about two hours we reached the station of Goorgaon, and, sure enough, when we reached that place, Jumna Das begged us to dismount and wait for fifteen or sixteen minutes, while he went to his home in the town to tell his family that he would be absent all night. Having a vivid remembrance of what we, a little while before, had been told of our guide's plots, we said that we should pull up when we got out of the station. On getting clear of walls and buildings, we halted in an open field, and, in less than twenty-five minutes, our friend rejoined us, and we put ourselves entirely into his hands. I do not know anything of the country through which he took us; but every pathway seemed familiar to the guide. When we were making our way through a thick jungle, we missed our guide for a moment in a very mysterious way. The little party halted, and all we could do was to spread out and go back upon our track. Very soon we came upon our friend, who had got off his horse, and was tightening the saddle-girths. The proceeding seemed suspicious to persons who every moment expected something unusual to occur, and I begged Ford to have his pistol handy, and empty it into our guide's body on the first appearance of treachery.

[1] Court House.

Shortly after this the moon rose, and Jumna Das saw that Ford and I, who were riding on each side of him, had our pistols in our hands. He said nothing, but with flint and steel lighted the match of his own weapon, an antiquated matchlock. Nothing really occurred during the night, but before dawn we were in the vicinity of Delhi, and we could occasionally see shells bursting over the city. When we got near the Hansi Road, Jumna Das stopped. He said he could not take us any further. He would take no reward that we could offer him, but he expressed a hope that, when the country was settled again, we should not forget the little service he had been able to do for us. We gave him a scrap of writing and thanked him with great sincerity. His services were in due course brought to the notice of Government, but I regret to say they were most inadequately rewarded. We remained where Jumna Das left us till it was clear daylight. As soon as the people of the nearest village began to move about, I approached them, and holding up a little pile of rupees, I said I would give them to the person who would show us the way to the English camp. A young fellow volunteered to take us, not into the camp, but to the nearest picquet in rear of the camp. After crossing the canal we felt that every step took us nearer and nearer to our gaol. In less than an hour we were in the camp, when I delivered my despatches and reported myself for duty.

N.B. . . . . Mr Ford got the C.S.I., the jemadar, Mir Mendi Zumma, was promoted to resáldar,[1] and received a considerable grant of land ; and two of his nephews, who were duffadars, were made native officers. For myself, the authorities never even acknowledged the receipt of my very brief report. D. M. S.

The preceding narrative was written by Sir Donald Stewart in the year 1894, at the request of Lord Roberts, who has published an abstract of the

[1] The highest rank attainable by a native Cavalry officer.

story as one of the appendices of his "Forty-One Years in India." In forwarding the manuscript to Lord Roberts, Sir Donald wrote :—

Here is a rough account of my story. It is badly put together, but it contains the most prominent facts. Of course, at this length of time, it is not easy to express all I went through. The journey itself was a very exhausting one, as I had no means of getting nourishment and proper rest, nor can I put on paper now the excitement under which the journey was made. . . . . I have done what I could for Jumna Das' relations, but his family had powerful enemies in the district, who had it in their power to prejudice the local authorities against them. Why he came to our rescue at Badshapore I have never been able to make out. . . . . I do not think we could have reached the camp before Delhi without his aid.

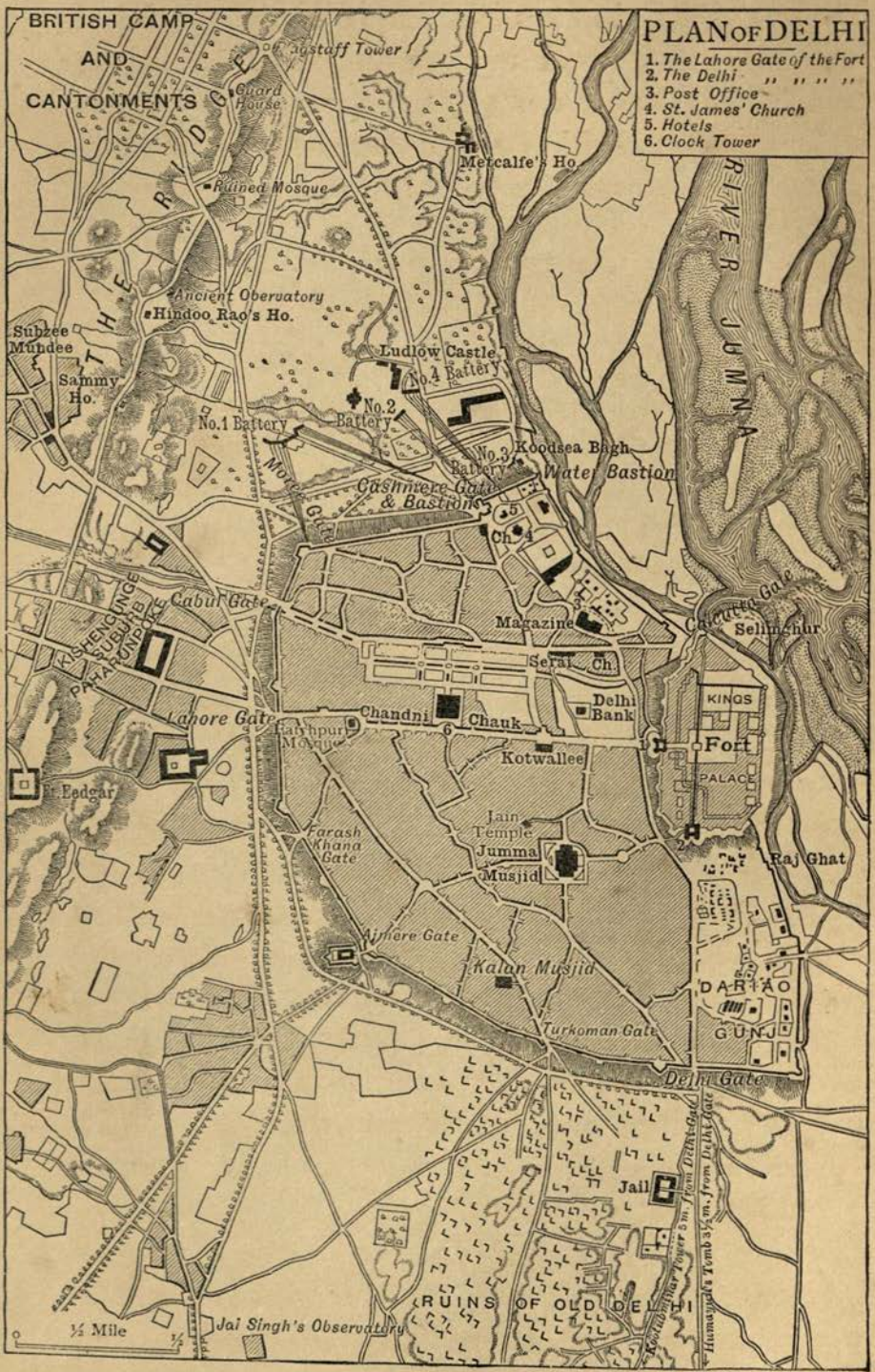
An additional incident of the "Ride" is related by Mr George Ricketts, C.B., who was Deputy-Commissioner of Loodiana in 1857. Mr Ricketts visited Delhi just after the siege, and heard the story of his adventures from Stewart himself.

After his night's ride Stewart halted for rest for himself and horse at one of those large serais, built in the Mahomedan times as travellers' rests. It was, as they all are, a large walled enclosure, with one large gateway, and rooms all round for the travellers' use, and the grain and food shops to supply their wants. Stewart selected a room in a far off corner, and tied his horse up outside, but he couldn't keep positively in hiding, and was seen, and recognised as an Englishman, by a native traveller, who came up and entered into conversation with him on the general state of affairs. Mutiny and rebellion everywhere gave plenty of topics for conversation. He declared he

was himself quite in favour of the British Government, and a well-wisher for their success. His good faith was shortly to be tested, for the day was not far advanced when the serai gates were thrown open, and in marched a whole regiment of Irregular Cavalry that had mutinied down country, with the native officers at their head. The officers pitched in the centre opposite the gateway, and the men filed off right and left, and picketed their horses the whole length of the serai. Stewart was caught in a trap from which there was apparently no escape, for to reach the only exit, he would have to pass in front of the regiment, and had he been seen he would have been murdered to a certainty, and it was almost impossible he could lie concealed, for the men were sure to disperse, looking about the serai and looking up the travellers, and there was his horse outside, sure to attract the longing eye of some of the men. Here the resource and ready cunning of his native friend came into play. He told Stewart his plan, which was this. He waited till the native officer in command was fairly alone, when he passed by, to and fro, to attract his notice, which he succeeded in doing, and after a few complimentary and flattering remarks, he told him this story. "Resáldar Sahib, you seem very confident and safe, but are you justified in feeling so? All your men are stripped and your horses tied up, but I fear you are caught in a trap from which if you are found there will be no escape, and you are nearly sure to be found, for we know there is a large force of British troops searching all this country; they have not been here yet, but they are sure not to omit such an important place as this. I give you this information as a well-wisher of your cause." The resáldar was profuse in his thanks, told him to tell none of his men, and that when they and their horses were fed he would move off, and this he soon after did; ordered his men to dress and fall in with all speed, and led them all out on their way to Delhi, and old Stewart felt much relieved when he saw the last man disappear and the gates closed behind him. He never, I believe, met or heard of his native friend again.

Lord Roberts, after describing the "Ride to Delhi," adds :—

It is difficult to over-estimate the pluck and enterprise displayed by Stewart during this most adventurous ride. It was a marvel that he ever reached Delhi. . . . . The qualities which prompted him to undertake and carried him through his dangerous journey marked him as a man worthy of advancement and likely to do well.



Walker & Boutall sc.

Map to illustrate Letters and Diary written during the Siege of Delhi.

[*To face p.* 65.

CHAPTER V

ON THE RIDGE BEFORE DELHI

In order to realise the position of affairs in the British camp at the time when Stewart arrived, it is necessary to take a brief retrospect. Upon the first news of the Meerut outbreak General Anson, the Commander-in-Chief, hurried down from Simla to Umballa. On the 17th May a small detachment of European troops of all arms was despatched from Umballa to Kurnal, as the advanced portion of the Delhi army. A few days later, on the death of General Anson, at Kurnal, Sir Henry Barnard succeeded to the command, continued the march, effected a junction with a portion of the Meerut Garrison, and on 8th June encountered the mutineers, who had taken up a position a few miles in front of Delhi. The British captured the guns of the enemy and drove the mutineers within the walls of the city. The famous Ridge was then occupied, and was thenceforth held throughout the siege by the picquets of the British force. Next day the little army of 3800 men was re-inforced by the Guides, a fine body of Cavalry and Infantry, who marched 580 miles from the Punjab frontier in twenty-two days. Immediately on arrival, the Guide Corps took a

leading part in repelling an attack on the British position. For some days it was hoped that the city might be carried by a *coup de main*, and on one occasion the attempt would, but for an accident, have been made. It soon became apparent, however, that, though the besieging army was from time to time re-inforced—by the end of June it numbered 6500 men—the mutineer force was receiving far larger accessions of strength in the shape of regiments and batteries. An assault, therefore, could not be attempted without serious risk of disaster. It indeed seemed clear that the British, wholly outnumbered in troops and guns, could capture Delhi, if at all, only by a regular siege. For several weeks, accordingly, while the necessary siege train and further re-inforcements were being sent down from the Punjab, the British were more besieged than besiegers. Harassed by heavy fire from the bastions, and continually engaged in repelling attacks on their camp, they strengthened their position by batteries and defensive posts, and defeated attempts to cut their line of communication with the Punjab. The city walls were surrounded by much broken and rocky ground, where jungle and gardens and ruined buildings afforded good opportunity for desultory attacks, very trying to an outnumbered and overtaxed force. Each new contingent of mutineers, as it reached Delhi, was sent to try its luck with the besiegers, and a succession of encounters told terribly on the scanty ranks of the British. Cholera, sunstroke, and fever added seriously to the drain. Fortunately, owing to divided counsels, conflicting interests, and the absence of a competent leader, no general con-

centrated attack was made, though on June the 12th, on June 23rd (the centenary of Plassey), and other occasions, the mutineers attacked the British position in formidable numbers, and with a spirit which severely strained the courage and resolution of our troops. Towards the end of June, among other welcome re-inforcements, arrived one of the master spirits of the period, Neville Chamberlain,[1] who, leaving the command of the movable column, with which he had been keeping order in the Punjab, to another hero of the time, John Nicholson, had succeeded to the post of Adjutant-General. Elsewhere things had been going badly for the British cause. At Cawnpore, the native troops had mutinied on the 5th June, and, after three weeks of unexampled horrors, the tiny English garrison and a great body of English women and children had, on the 27th June, been the victims of the dreadful tragedy, which has made its author, Nana Sahib, a name of eternal execration. At Lucknow, Sir Henry Lawrence had been, throughout June, busily engaged in putting the ground near the Residency in a condition of defence, and in collecting stores for the siege which he saw to be imminent. Towards the end of June the mutineers, who had been gathering in the east of Oudh, advanced against Lucknow, inflicted a severe repulse on a force led by Sir Henry Lawrence at Chinhut, and on the 1st July closed in upon the European inhabitants, civil and military, now concentrated around the Residency.

So ran the tide of battle when Donald Stewart, travel-stained and exhausted, made his way to the

[1] The late Field-Marshal Sir Neville Chamberlain, G.C.B., G.C.S.I.

British camp, and forthwith became an active participant in the labours, excitements, and perils of the army before Delhi.

Sir Henry Norman, who was then Assistant Adjutant-General, gives an interesting account of Stewart's arrival and reception in the camp.

By the latter part of June the force had become of the strength of a considerable division, and, as there was daily fighting, Sir Henry Barnard found that it was impossible for his one officer of the Adjutant-General's department to carry on efficiently all his duties in the office and in the field. He therefore obtained General Reed's[1] sanction to appoint another officer to this department, younger than the existing Assistant Adjutant-General, in view of employing the one principally in the field and the other at the desk, though both would be interchangeable in their duties, and, on occasion, both would be in the field. Having obtained this sanction, Sir Henry Barnard came to me and asked me to suggest an officer for this post, for which he wanted one who was peculiarly active and efficient. I asked him to allow me to defer naming anyone until the next morning, as the selection seemed to me to require much thought. During the night I anxiously considered whom I should name, but was not able to make up my mind, as various qualifications seemed necessary. In the morning I took a walk up and down the camp, while I endeavoured to decide whom I should name, when I suddenly saw a group of horsemen ride into the rear of the Head-quarter camp, headed by an officer in a red flannel shirt. I recognised my friend Stewart, and soon heard his story. Without speaking to him on the subject I went to the General, and suggested his appointment, well assured that Stewart would fill the office in all

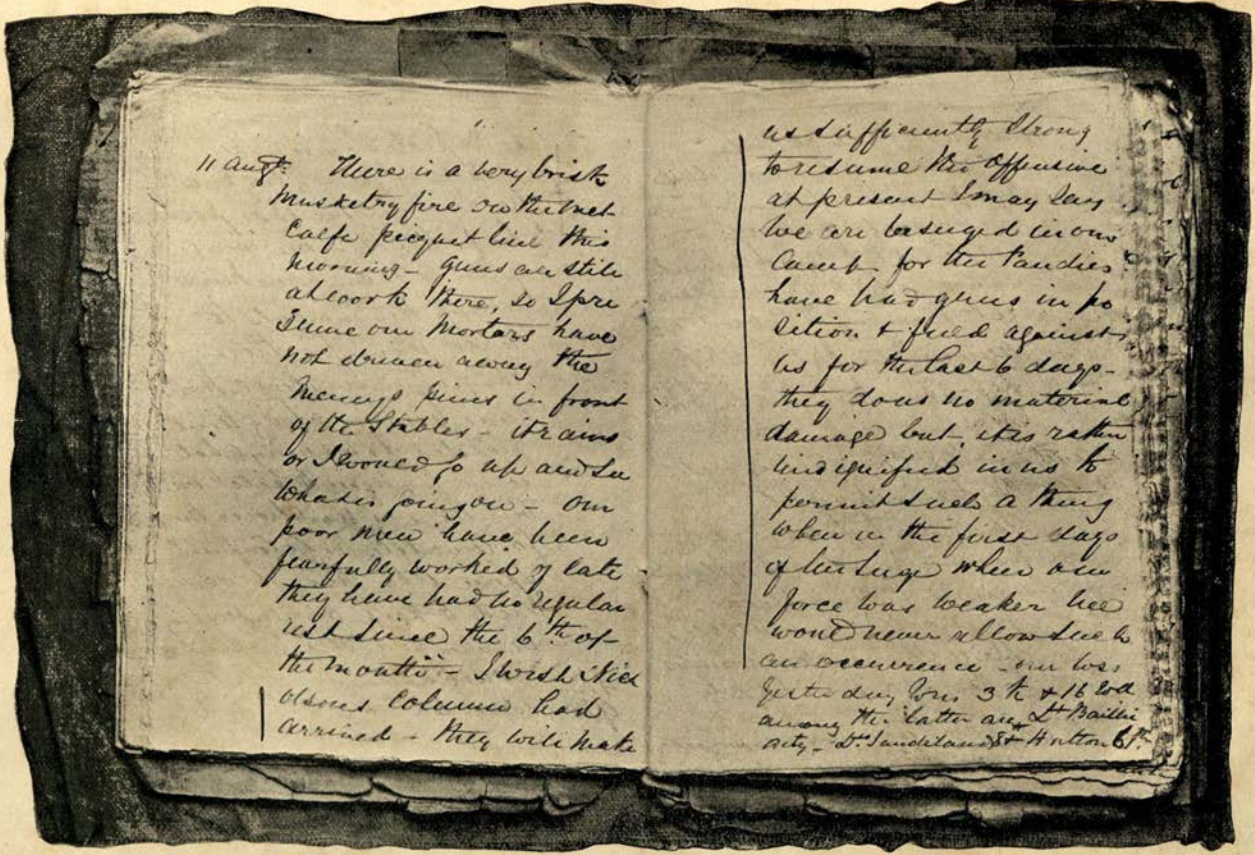
[1] General Reed, who had become Acting Commander-in-Chief in Bengal on the death of General Anson, joined the Delhi force on the 8th June, but only exercised a general control until the death of General Barnard on the 5th July.

respects in a satisfactory way. The General at once settled to appoint him, and I need hardly say that neither Sir Henry Barnard nor his successor (for Barnard died within a week)[1] was disappointed. To the end of the siege Stewart was invaluable in the field and in office and at the staff mess, and as a comrade he was ever cheery and companionable. He arrived in camp with hardly anything but what he had on his back, but he was soon sufficiently fitted out, and the meals at the staff mess, though not very luxurious, soon sufficed to set him up after his poor fare and the fatigue and exposure of the previous weeks. From that time I was much associated with him, and indeed I think, in all circumstances, by day and by night. Few comrades were ever more together than Edwin Johnson, Donald Stewart, Fred Roberts and myself, though Roberts was for a few weeks after the 14th July incapacitated by a wound from accompanying us. We were all quite confident of success, and never doubted that our assault of Delhi would be successful, if delivered after a bombardment from the siege guns and mortars, which we expected at the end of August or early in September.

The spirits of the members of the staff were generally excellent, and Stewart was one of our most pleasant companions, always ready with some quaint remark. He had the entire confidence of General Wilson, who succeeded to Sir Henry Barnard's command, and was active not only in accompanying the General in his rides, but also in constantly riding about to see all that was going on at our out-posts. During the days of the bombardment, prior to the assault, and during the six days' contest in the city after the assault, Stewart, like most of us, was always on duty and constantly under fire. He escaped, however, unhurt, and was one of the staff, who, on the 21st September, the day after the capture of the palace—entertained General Wilson within the palace walls at a dinner, at which we drank the health of our Gracious Queen, and also proposed that of General Wilson as the Conqueror of Delhi.

[1] See Appendix II.

From the 2nd July to the end of September, we have, as our main text, Donald Stewart's little memorandum book, extemporised, evidently, by an amateur binder, and bearing clear evidence of the rough usage which it has undergone. Though kept obviously for the purposes of his department, and little more than a bare chronicle of engagements and losses, this journal presents a vivid picture of the stirring life of the camp, and of the intense strain of that eventful period on the nerves and strength of all concerned. To read and transcribe this record has been a task of some difficulty, but it is confidently believed that the labour is well repaid by the great interest of the contents, now for the first time placed before the general reader. The tale of the losses day by day, of men killed or disabled in action, or prostrated by sunstroke or cholera, gives a dreadful sense of the rate at which the little force was wasting away. Stewart's habit of extreme reticence as to his own feelings displays itself in this little book. Not a word is spared for the adventurous ride which had brought him to the Delhi camp. The first entry records merely that the 9th Native Infantry mutinied on the 20th May, that Stewart joined the force before Delhi on the 28th June, and was appointed Deputy-Assistant Adjutant-General, and attached to the Field Force by an order of 2nd July 1857. From that date the entries are kept with military precision till the end of September. Their business-like brevity has an eloquence of its own, and seems to bring one very close to the events—many of them have now become historical—which they relate. No apology, therefore, seems to be necessary for using the diary



11 Augt. There is a very brisk
musketry fire on the Met-
calfe picquet line this
morning - guns are still
at work there, so I pre-
sume our Mortars have
not driven away the
Mennys pines in front
of the Stables - it rains
or I would go up and see
what is going on - our
poor men have been
fearfully worked of late -
they have had no regular
rest since the 6th of
the month - I wish Nick
Olsons Column had
arrived - they will make

us sufficiently strong
to resume the offensive
at present I may say
we are besieged in our
Camp for the Pandies
have had guns in po-
sition & field against
us for the last 6 days -
they do us no material
damage but, it is rather
undignified in us to
permit such a thing
when in the first days
of the Siege when our
force was weaker we
would never allow such
an occurrence - our loss
yesterday was 3 K & 16 wd
among the latter are Lt Baillie
acty - Dr Sandiland 8th & Hutton 6th

Fac-simile of Diary kept by Donald Stewart during Siege of Delhi. [*To face p.* 70.

as the chief exponent of the story of Stewart's life during the siege.

Diary, 4th July 1857.—The enemy came out in force to our rear, crossed the canal at Alipore, and plundered Lieutenant Younghusband, 5th Punjab Cavalry's, camp. Major Coke was ordered to attack them on their return to Delhi. After a brisk artillery fire the enemy retreated. Owing to the difficulty of the ground to our front, they carried off their guns.

Captain Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

CAMP BEFORE DELHI, *6th July* 1857.

I arrived here on the 29th[1] of last month I think. I forget the exact date of my arrival, but the day before I started from Hodul I wrote you a few lines. . . . . I was, as usual, disappointed in getting an escort or guides from Captain Eden's force, but Mr Ford came with me. As we had some thirty sowars, we made a start of it, much against the wishes of Mr Harvey, the Commissioner, and Captain Eden, who thought it a most dangerous trip. However, we managed to get through the country at night very nicely. We met several parties of mutineers proceeding to Delhi, but we put a bold face on matters and attacked them, when they took to their heels for the most part. However, I am the only European officer who has been able to join the army from the South or East, and I am rather proud of the feat too. . . . . The day before yesterday I took part in my first general action. A large force of the mutineers came out and plundered a village in our rear during the night. In the morning we were ready for them, and attacked as they were returning with their plunder. They only stood for a few minutes, but

[1] The diary gives the date as the 28th, but the 29th is probably correct. The letter from Hodul, 50 miles from Delhi, was written on the 26th and 27th June, and, under the circumstances, two days at least must have been spent in riding 50 miles.

Hodson,[1] who is again acting commandant of the Guides, did not attack, as he was ordered to do with his Cavalry, and the Artillery, strange to say, were dilatory in their movements. Consequently, we did not kill so many as we ought to have done, and we, I am sorry to say, allowed them to carry back their guns. It was a very pretty action throughout, and was well managed, barring the accidents above-mentioned. . . . . Hodson confessed that he considered the enemy too strong for his Cavalry. . . . . The officers and residents at Shajehanpore have all been killed. They were attacked in church, and murdered in cold blood. Those who were not at church, six in number, fled towards Oudh, and were met by the mutineers of the 41st Native Infantry, who shot them all, so that not one officer of the 28th Native Infantry or civilian at Shajehanpore escaped. I am happy to say that the men, against whom we fought on the 4th, were the mutineers of this corps and the regiments from Bareilly. Only fancy the impudence of a subadar in the Artillery at Bareilly! After firing grape at the officers and driving them out of the station, he took an airing in the Brigadier's carriage on the Mall. The rest of the native officers at the same time were seen driving about in the officers' carriages and buggies. This man, the subadar of the Artillery, commanded the force that fought with us the other day, and we hear he has been appointed Commander-in-Chief of the rebel forces in Delhi. . . . . The latest news from down country is of the 8th June, so that we know not what has been going on at Cawnpore and Benares. There has been great fighting, but the Europeans in every instance throughout the country have prevailed against the scoundrels. . . . . You know how the sight of a wound or operation affects me, but I seemed to be perfectly callous of any humane feeling when they were, before my eyes, cut down by our Cavalry. Some of the wounded men I wished to speak to, but they would not open their mouths, and treated death with the utmost indifference. Several, who have

[1] The well-known Hodson of Hodson's Horse.

been lately blown away from guns, walked up to them as if they were going to get a medal instead of a horrible death. Infatuated wretches! . . . . They seem to be mad, and care not what becomes of them. . . . .

Diary, 9th July.—The "Pandays"[1] attacked us in force from the Subzi Mundi.[2] Brigadier-General N. Chamberlain took the command, and drove them back to the town after a hard contest. The enemy lost about 500 killed. Our loss was 212, including 1 officer killed and 8 wounded.

Captain Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

CAMP BEFORE DELHI, *13th July* 1857.

It is not often that I have a moment to myself now, as the enemy turn out and attack us at all times and seasons. We have now been a month and four days before the city, and the troops have been engaged more than twenty-five times. On the 9th inst. we went out and gave them an awful thrashing. We killed upwards of eighty of the mutineers; their wounded were carried into the city in cart-loads. The loss on our side was pretty heavy—212 killed and wounded; 1 officer was killed and 8 wounded. Brigadier Neville Chamberlain, the Adjutant-General, commanded the troops, and I was the staff officer with him. We were out from 11 A.M. till nearly 5 P.M., and it rained cats and dogs the whole time. It was most disagreeable fighting, all among the gardens, old ruins, and deserted suburbs, where the enemy were pretty nearly equal to the Europeans, as they were intimate with the ground. They had a good dose of it, however, as they have not shown themselves since. Yesterday we were all turned out, as our intelligence from the city was that the men were accoutred and ready to come

[1] "Panday" is a caste to which many of the old Sepoys belonged. In common parlance the mutinous Sepoys generally were referred to as "Pandays."

[2] A suburb of Delhi.

out about one o'clock in the afternoon. It was either a false alarm, or they changed their intentions; for they did not come..... I fear we shall not, after all, take Delhi so soon as was expected. They are still so strong in the city, that it would be hazardous to risk everything upon the assault. I have no doubt that it would succeed; but whether we could hold the town is another matter. I know not what those in authority intend to do, but it looks as if we were to wait until re-inforcements arrive from Cawnpore. It is reported that Sir Hugh Wheeler, with four European regiments, is advancing on Delhi; but I never believe anything now that I don't see with my own eyes. I am most anxious that the road should be opened up between Agra and this. . . . From all parts of the country we have accounts of fresh outbreaks among the troops, and at this moment I don't know a single corps in the Bengal army that has stood to its duty. As for placing confidence in any one of them, no sane man will now do so. The Gurkha corps and some of the Sikh regiments have as yet behaved well, but they are the only troops, regular or irregular, who have remained loyal. . . . .

Diary, 14th July.—The Pandays came out in force to-day, and after a good deal of skirmishing in the Subzi Mundi, were driven back into the town. When our troops began to retire, they were followed in large numbers by the enemy, who were a second time vigorously attacked by the Gurkhas (Sirmur Battalion) and 1st Fusiliers, and again driven into the town. A few of the Europeans were between the guns of the enemy and the town walls, but, being without support, they did not attempt to capture them. I believe Hodson and six Guides rode up to their guns, which might have been taken had our men been properly handled and supported.[1] . . . . There are all sorts of rumours in camp regarding the re-inforcements from Cawnpore.

[1] For detail of casualties in this affair see first paragraph of letter of 21st July, p. 77 *infra*.

15th July.—A quiet day. Our batteries gave a few rounds to our friends in the city whilst the picquets were in course of relief. General Reed has been suffering from fever for some days. The command of this force seems to have a fatal effect on whomsoever it devolves. . . . .

16th July.—. . . . Brigadier Wilson appointed Commander of Field Force, with rank of Brigadier-General by G.O. of this date. . . . . The Pandays threatened to attack us to-day. Brigadier Wilson's arrangements are evidently defensive; he only told off troops to support the picquets already furnished.

17th July.—General Reed leaves Camp for Simla this evening on medical certificate. . . . .

18th July.—The Pandays turned out this morning about six o'clock; our arrangements for the first part of the day were entirely defensive. About 2 P.M. Colonel Jones, 60th Rifles, with the available troops in camp (600 Europeans, 100 Natives, and 4 guns) went into the Subzi Mundi, and after some sharp fighting, turned out the enemy, who retired towards the city. The object of sending a force into the suburbs at all was not apparent, seeing that our picquets there stationed were quite capable of defending themselves without loss. As usual in all our attacks in the Subzi Mundi, our loss was pretty severe. . . . This morning a convoy of entrenching tools and some ammunition arrived from Lahore. General Reed, who left us last night, published a complimentary farewell order, in which my name was mentioned as one of those to whom "his acknowledgments were eminently due"; this is pretty well, seeing he hardly knew me by sight. Many of the staff mentioned he actually did not know by sight.

Sunday, 19th July.—We were threatened with another attack from the Pandays this morning; my horse was kept saddled for several hours, but as they appeared to think better of it I sent her back to the stable. At half-past 2 P.M. the Pandays made their appearance again, but after the dose they had yesterday, I doubt if they will attempt a regular

attack. About 5 o'clock I got a note from Lieutenant Eckford, 6th Native Infantry, telling me of the illness of Ross.[1] He was seized with cholera on the morning of the 19th at 1 o'clock. When I saw him he was quite sensible, but he did not appear to be aware of his danger; he died at sunset this evening. Lieutenant Rivers of the 75th, who was in hospital suffering from a slight wound, was attacked with cholera at the same time as poor Ross, and died at the same time—a curious coincidence. Both were strong, powerful men.

20th July.—Young Ellis of the Carabineers died of cholera this forenoon. He was only taken ill yesterday. . . . . The enemy turned us out this morning before breakfast. They made a feeble attack on our right flank, which ended in nothing but a lot of "dic"[2] to the troops. I fancy they are aware of this, and send out a few men purposely to annoy the force. . . . .

21st July.—Our attack yesterday afternoon under Colonel Seaton was a very feeble affair. Three Guides and one of H.M. 8th, were wounded; the object of the attack was not apparent. This morning I heard that Travers of Coke's Corps was slightly wounded in the main battery yesterday. A very melancholy accident occurred yesterday evening. After dinner Captain Greensill, H.M. 24th, and another officer agreed to search the nullah in front of the Metcalfe picquets for the entrance to a supposed mine, which is said to be in progress in that quarter. Greensill came suddenly upon the other party, who challenged him, but as he gave no reply that could be heard, the officer fired and shot him through the stomach, the ball having passed through Greensill and wounded a soldier of the 75th, who was behind him. Poor Greensill, who only lived for six hours, said he answered the challenge and desired them not to fire, but of course he was not heard.

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[1] Lieutenant Ross had been a brother officer of Stewart in the 9th Native Infantry, and was at this time attached to the 75th Foot.

[2] "Dic"=worry.

Captain Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

CAMP BEFORE DELHI, 21*st July* 1857.

I sent off my last letter on the 14th, just before I started for the Subzi Mundi with Brigadier Chamberlain. We had a very sharp affair that day, and lost two hundred and seven, killed and wounded. Among the latter were sixteen officers. Brigadier Chamberlain was severely wounded in the left arm; Ross of the 9th was shot through the foot whilst talking to me. Fred Roberts was also slightly wounded.

Just as I had got thus far a report has come in from the front batteries that the enemy are turning out for an attack, so I must be off to look after the troops required for duty. I had intended to write you a long letter, but you see we never have a certain moment to ourselves. We have been out for the last three days from gun-fire till sunset. . . . . After getting my horse and everything ready, I find that the enemy have not made up their minds to attack. They have, however, succeeded in turning out all the available troops in camp, which is almost as bad as having to fight. This has been their dodge for the last four days. I forgot to tell you that poor Ross, who was doing so well as regards his wound, was seized with cholera on the night of the 18th, and died on the evening of the 19th. I had just time to go down to the Field Hospital and speak a few words to him before he expired. This makes the sixth officer the 75th have lost since they appeared before Delhi on the 8th of last month. Cholera is very rife in the camp just now, and no wonder, for the place where we are pitched is an abominable swamp, and when it rains the camp is a lake. A report has this day come from Lahore that Sir H. Lawrence has blown up his entrenchments at Lucknow, and marched over to Cawnpore with H.M.'s 32nd Regiment, for the purpose of joining Sir Hugh Wheeler, who is said to be marching up to Delhi with three European regiments.[1] I wish these troops

[1] All this report not true, of course.

would make their appearance soon. The delay in the fall of the city has a most damaging effect upon the state of the country; the people are in the mass, I think, favourable to our rule; but the higher classes and the military are evidently against us.

Diary, 22nd July.— . . . . . We were turned out this morning at 3.30 A.M., by an alarm from the city. It appears that the enemy are fearful of an attack on the town from our side. After getting out of bed it was discovered that there was no need for turning out the troops, who were thereupon ordered to return to their tents. Campbell, 9th Irregular Cavalry, came into camp the day before yesterday and reported that seventy-four of his men had gone off in a body to Delhi on the night of the 18th. Twenty-seven men, including three duffadars and a jemadar, deserted from 17th Cavalry. . . .

23rd July.—Turned out this morning early by an attack on the Metcalfe picquet line; they had three or four field guns near Ludlow Castle, and played in fine style on our light field batteries, planted on the ridge near the mosque and observatory. Brigadier Showers was sent with a detachment to attack and seize the guns. Through some misunderstanding or mismanagement the guns escaped capture. There was a good deal of hesitation in the advance of our guns when they got near the enemy. Some Europeans who moved to the front retired in disorder; they, however, rallied at once, and again advanced, when the enemy bolted with his guns, and escaped into the town. The Metcalfe picquets, instead of keeping along the river bank till they got to the rear of the position occupied by the Pandays, rushed at once to the road and foiled the whole affair—at least, such is my own opinion. Had they got between the guns and the city, and had our party drawn up on the road outside, attacked at once and vigorously, I feel confident the guns would at this moment have been in our park. They were not even pointed in the direction from which our attack was made, but at the batteries on the ridge. . . . . No wonder the General was vexed. . . . . By the way, the General was, after break-

fast, seized with palpitation or cramp in the region of the heart. I most sincerely trust nothing will happen to him, for we are badly off indeed in regard to superior officers.

24th July.—This has been the first quiet day we have had for a long time. I fancy the reason is because it has rained so heavily all day. . . . . Major Reid[1] says that he is to send me a khitmatgar[2] to-day, a fact worthy of being entered in my diary. I have been trying to get one for the last twenty-six days, and without success. . . . .

26th July.—It is reported in the city that the Neemuch mutineers have been ordered to take up a position in our rear somewhere near Alipore.[3] Should they be able to effect this in force, we shall for a time be rather in a fix, because, owing to our want of good cavalry, we are not in a position to prevent a considerable force occupying any part of the road between this and Kurnal. The enemy will, however, have some difficulty in transporting field guns across country on either side of the river. Indeed, owing to the recent heavy rains, I should think it an impossible feat, with the establishment of horses they are supposed to possess. Brigadier-General Nicholson, with the movable column, has been ordered to join this army. The 52nd Light Infantry and a wing of another European regiment, 300 strong, or 900 in all, will be a great acquisition to our weak and hard-worked force. . . . .

28th July.—The Pandays threatened to come out to-day. They have been joined by the Neemuch mutineers, consisting of (according to an informer from the city) 1600 cavalry, two batteries of artillery, and five regiments of foot.[4] This force came into Delhi on 26th inst.; they are said to have no money or ammunition. The king appears to think his case rather hopeless; of the success of his cause the Sepoys themselves are very desponding. There is nothing but squabbles and affrays of all sorts in the city;

[1] Of the Gurkhas, afterwards General Sir Charles Reid, G.C.B.

[2] Table servant.

[3] A village a few miles north of Delhi.

[4] The alleged strength of the Neemuch mutineers was greatly exaggerated.

confusion reigns everywhere. A Hindu subadar of the 1st Light Cavalry commands the Neemuch mutineers; their first selection had both his hands shot off at Agra.

29th July.—Pandays threatened an attack, but as usual it came to nothing. The Assembly was sounded in the city, why no one knows. . . . . Paid Neville Chamberlain a visit to-day and wrote a couple of letters for him. He is getting on very well, but he is compelled to lie in one position, *i.e.* on his back, day after day.

30th July.—All quiet in Delhi; the Pandays are evidently reserving themselves for a grand attack, or they have dissensions among themselves. They talk of coming out on the "Eed," but as on this festival the Mahomedans are more inveterate against Hindus than Christians, I don't know what the result will be.

31st July.—Turned out this morning at 6 A.M. A large body of the enemy with ten guns and three mortars are endeavouring to repair the Bussye Bridge;[1] they say they are in number 7000. Heard to-day of the awful atrocities committed at Cawnpore; they quite throw into the shade the Delhi and Meerut massacres. Very busy and no time to add to this. Coke's movable column, two hundred European Infantry, two hundred Coke's corps, five guns, squadron 9th Lancers, and 2nd Punjab Cavalry, march this evening 7 P.M. towards Alipore. They may escort the Kumaon Battalion and convoy as far back as Badla Serai. I don't believe they will meet the enemy, who, in my opinion, cannot transport guns across the country on the other side of the canal. . . .

1st August.—The heaviest rain to-day since we have been in camp. The Pandays have, notwithstanding, turned out in large numbers, and some folk say have got their guns across the canal. It is quite possible that this is the case, but physically impossible that they can bring them to our rear. They have abandoned the idea of crossing over at

[1] Over the cut of the Najufgurh Swamp, some eight miles from camp.

the old Bussye Bridge, and have made an attempt to repair another one nearer camp.

Sunday, 2nd August.—Yesterday afternoon, about five o'clock, the enemy attacked our right with 4000 or 5000 men and six guns. They kept up the fire the whole night and three times charged the "Sammy House,"[1] and the breastwork to its right, but were beaten off each time. Regular reliefs of the attacking parties must have taken place, for their attacks were kept up till 4 P.M. to-day, or, in all, twenty-four hours. The General wisely directed Major Reid to defend his post and to attempt nothing more. This judicious arrangement has acted admirably; the enemy were at last worn out and compelled to retire, after having lost a great number of men. On our side the loss was trifling. The only officer is poor Putty Travers of Coke's corps. He had only returned from England with a young wife, and had been with her not a whole month in India, when he had to join his corps before Delhi. He was a good fellow, and much liked. It is strange that for some time he should have been in the habit of writing most desponding letters to his wife at Lahore. The General is still weak and looks anything but well. Still he carries on his work, and would quickly recover, were it not that he is worried by so many people and staff officers, who will not leave him to himself. Our loss last night and this morning was—10 killed and 36 wounded. The enemy have evidently had a good pounding, for they report 500 killed and wounded. In one spot, one of our officers counted 27 dead bodies. It is supposed they must be pressed for cartridges, as some of the places they were driven from were found to contain loose powder.

3rd August.—This day a despatch has come in from Brigadier Havelock, dated Left Bank of the Ganges, Cawnpore, on the 25th July. He states that he defeated the enemy on the 12th . . . on the 15th, and on the 16th July, and that on each occasion he took all their guns. He

[1] An old temple, called by the European soldiers "The Sammy House." It was a small building held in a very exposed position in advance of our right front.

is obliged to relieve Lucknow by specific orders from Government, and regrets that he cannot come on here at once. . . . To have established direct communications with the authorities below is of the most vital consequence. Brigadier-General Nicholson and his movable column were at Loodiana on the 30th and 31st, and intended to prosecute their march on the 1st August. They should reach camp by the 18th inst. without fatigue. I hope the re-inforcements will be sufficient to enable us to storm and capture the city. The kossid,[1] who brought the letter from Havelock, says that the whole road from Cawnpore to Delhi is covered with fugitives who are in the utmost disorder and distress.

4th August.—We have been very quiet all day, only occasional shots from the city and from our batteries in return. To-day, Captain Nixon, in a letter to Colonel Becher, says that the Pandays make their powder in the Begum Sumroo's old house. This is the house formerly occupied by the Delhi Bank. We are going to try and shell it with some of the old Howitzers, which are to be sunk in the ground for the purpose.

5th August.—The English mail is in (mail of 24th June). The telegram says no despatch from India has been received since that of 11th May from Bombay. Consequently, there is no account of how the news regarding the mutiny has been received at home. There is nothing going on in camp. Jan Fishan Khan's nephew, who has been paying us a visit, says that a letter just received from Lucknow says Sir Henry Lawrence is still alive.

A telegraphic message was yesterday sent to his brother, Sir John, that he died on the 4th July of a wound received on the 2nd idem. . . . . The natives from city still bring in the most exaggerated accounts regarding their loss on the 1st and 2nd inst. It is said that the Neemuch force, who stood the brunt of the whole affair, say that they were sacrificed, and that in consequence they will fight no more; till next time, I suppose. . . . .

[1] Messenger.

7th August.—Yesterday evening there was an attempt at a plan for a night attack from the Cashmere Gate on our left front. They remained out all night in the Teli Mundi and Kishengunge. It was thought that their intention was to renew the plan of attack carried out on the 1st and 2nd inst. We were this morning, however, let into the secret of their movements by seeing a heavy gun-battery in Kishengunge in which one gun was mounted and another almost ready to be mounted. The General ordered our right battery to dismount these guns, and they have been peppering at them ever since morning. At breakfast it was reported that the embrasures were crumbling to pieces under our fire, and as the firing has almost ceased, it may be supposed that we have made them take away their guns or dismounted them. Brigadier-General Nicholson has come into camp.[1] I hope he will stir up the people in authority. I hope we may take Delhi before the Commander-in-Chief reaches camp. I don't want any one to divide the honours with our little force, who have had all the hard work. Yesterday we lost five killed and eighteen wounded. . . . .

Captain Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

CAMP BEFORE DELHI, *7th August* 1857.

. . . . . You will have read in the papers of the massacre of all the Europeans at Cawnpore and Futehgurh. From either station not a soul seems to have escaped. At Futehgurh were Colonel and Mrs Smith and her children; at Cawnpore were many acquaintances of ours. The 2nd Cavalry, 56th and 53rd Native Infantry, were at Cawnpore, but Sir Hugh Wheeler, who commanded, had not above 200 or 250 Europeans against 15,000 men with guns. Our troops when they retook Cawnpore had their revenge, for I hear they have com-

[1] Nicholson had evidently himself come on to Delhi in advance. Three days later he returned to his force, then on the march (see Diary, 10th August).

pletely destroyed the native portion of it. The natives whom we have been petting for a century have shown themselves to be perfect fiends; the atrocities they have committed since the outbreak have never been equalled by the most savage nations of Africa or America. The country will not for years get over the effects of this revolution, for I cannot call it anything else. The extermination of Europeans seems to be the sole bond of union among the natives, but it is evident that on all sides, high and low thought our rule had come to an end. How horror-struck they will be in England when they hear the worst, and how savage they will be when they know that the very existence of our hold on the country has been imperilled by our rulers. Since I have entered the service our territory has been increased by Sind, the Punjab, Nagpore, Oudh, besides many minor states, which have lapsed to us through failure of legitimate heirs, and yet our European force was at the outbreak weaker than it was before one of the above provinces was added. Our Government has a great deal to answer for. However, when Delhi falls, the rebels will have no point of rendezvous. At present, whenever they are beaten in any part of the country, they make straight for this place. This is perhaps an advantage, as when the final assault is made, we shall be enabled to slay more, and exterminate the whole Sepoy race, if possible. We must in self-defence teach them a lesson which shall never be forgotten, so long as English rule exists in India. I only fear that when all is over, the Government will become squeamish, and with the fear of Exeter Hall before their eyes, they may say that forgiveness should be granted to the cut-throats who have murdered our poor innocent children and weak, defenceless women. Fancy the baseness of the native officers of the 6th Native Infantry at Allahabad—on the very day they agreed to murder their officers at mess, they fell upon the officers' necks with tears in their eyes, and beseeched them to put the most implicit confidence in their loyalty and fidelity; and the poor deluded gentlemen believed them. That very night seventeen out of twenty officers were

butchered whilst sitting at the mess-table. Such are the men we have been trusting with our lives and property, against which they have been plotting for years, though we have only just found it out. I had a long letter from Eld[1] yesterday. He is, with all the European inhabitants of Agra, Mainpuri, Aligurh, Etawah, and all the Gwalior stations, cooped up in the Fort of Agra. After the fight of the 5th July, our troops retired into the fort and allowed the station to be plundered and burnt. They might easily have saved the station and all the property it contained, as the mutineers retired towards Muttra after the action. The station was plundered, etc., by the bazaar people and villagers. So much for having useless old fools at the head of affairs. . . . . All our senior officers are gradually being removed; they have failed in every respect. Only fancy young men like Neville Chamberlain and Nicholson being Generals! Edwardes, at Peshawur, has been the salvation of that portion of our territory. Had it not been for him, we should have had a frightful tragedy to record as well as infinite damage to our prestige in that quarter. . . . . God knows when I may be permitted to go home, and as the day appears at present to be somewhat distant, I must set myself up to some extent. I have no uniform of any description except my sword. I don't know what the Commander-in-Chief will say when he sees me turn out in shooting jacket and sword. There are many others in the same plight. . . . . *8th August.*—Our greatest loss has been the death of Sir Henry Lawrence. His soldierly qualities were great; it was only a man of his stamp that could have saved Lucknow and the Europeans assembled there with the small force under his command (about 500 men) against the whole of Oudh, backed by some twenty mutinous regiments trained by our officers. His death at a time like this is a national loss. . . . .

Diary, 8th August.—The Pandays out in the same

[1] The late Commanding Officer of the 9th Native Infantry.

place; we thought they had withdrawn their guns during the night, but this morning at 8 A.M. they mounted a large gun in Kishengunge, and repaired the other embrasure to its left. Since then our guns have apparently buried this gun in the ruins of the battery, and for some time it has been silent. One of the enemy's rockets blew up an ammunition waggon containing upwards of one hundred shells, a bore rather. The Pandays only found out these rockets a short time ago, but they are making up for lost time; they make better use of them than we do. The blowing up of the ammunition cart was a crow, but it shows they can direct their rockets properly. Our loss during the last twenty-four hours, nineteen wounded and three killed.

9th August.—Enemy still out, they are constructing another battery somewhere near Trevelyan Gunge for the purpose of enfilading the Ridge. Our casualties yesterday were one killed and eleven wounded. No officer was touched during the last twenty-four hours. Nothing else of consequence to record. Brigadier Garbett was slightly wounded yesterday; they say "a shell took off his coat tails." Two field-guns still peppering away at the stables of Metcalfe House and six out on the right.

10th August.—Despatched my letter and plan of position before Delhi to M. Daresay she will think the latter a great bore, it may be useful, however, for reference when names of places are made use of. To-night we are to place three 5-in. mortars in position at the mound of Metcalfe House; these should make the two guns in front of the stables marvel. This is one of the hottest days we have had. About 2 P.M. I became suddenly ill, and thought I was going to have an attack of cholera, but I lay down for an hour and got up quite well. Brigadier-General Nicholson returned to his camp this morning. . . . . I fancy they[1] will be here on the 13th, or perhaps the 12th. The whole of the Cavalry have moved across the nullah to make room for them. The ground on which

[1] *I.e.* Nicholson's force.

horses have been for a long time picketed is not very wholesome for men to pitch on, but there is no choice, unfortunately, in a confined space like this, if we intend to keep our Infantry on this side the nullah. . . . .

Captain Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

CAMP BEFORE DELHI, 11*th August* 1857.

. . . . . The stations from which no Christians have escaped are Cawnpore, Futehgurh, Shajehanpore, and Jhansi. It is not as yet known how many of our countrymen and country-women have been murdered, but it is past belief. The people of England, who at present seem to think nothing of the mutinies, will find out that the Crimean War was mere child's play, as far as officers are concerned, to the casualties that have occurred in this Presidency—I mean, of course, those who have been murdered, and those who have fallen in our efforts to punish. We have lost one hundred officers killed and wounded already at the Siege of Delhi, and many more will fall before we capture the town. Its doom is, however, sealed; and if ever a city deserved the fate that hangs over it, Delhi is that place. The poor wretches are going on as if they had as good a chance as ourselves; they are not, however, singular in this; for many of our camp-followers decamp daily, as if they thought it was our fate to be driven out of the country. They have first-rate information in the city regarding all our movements; we cannot move a man or a gun without their knowing it, and no sooner do we turn out for an attack than the alarm sounds in the city, and they are prepared for us. Our spies in the town give us very fair information regarding the doings there; but we cannot trust them altogether; they in all cases try to make their story as favourable to us as possible. In some of our news letters, mention is made by a native of "a regiment of women" (78th Highlanders) "which has arrived at Cawnpore, and plays old Harry" (the native's expression) "with every one." "Their

aspect is terrible, and there is no hope of escape from them." Such is a native's idea of a Highland regiment. There is a heavy fire going on on the left, so that I must stop for a while. . . . . I cannot settle down when anything particular is taking place, but I can sleep through an ordinary fire. . . . . *12th August.*—At half-past three this morning a column, under Brigadier Showers, went out to take some guns that were in position to our left front in a garden near Ludlow Castle. We made a dash at them as the day dawned, and captured four, with their waggons. We have lost a good many men, but the troops are satisfied with their success. Showers was wounded, so was Major Coke. *13th August.* — I was obliged to leave off yesterday rather abruptly. The fact is, that I have, in reality, no time that I can call my own. I have often to get up in the middle of the night and ride round camp to issue orders. This is the only way we can manage a secret expedition. The troops are not warned for duty till within ten minutes of the time of starting, so that it is not possible for the enemy to get any information, which they would certainly do were these things known and talked of at messes. They have the most wonderful way of finding out all about our movements through their spies. Our list of killed and wounded yesterday was much heavier than I anticipated. We had one hundred and fifteen killed and wounded, including eight officers. The Pandays took a leaf out of our book, and attempted a surprise on our left front this morning a little before daybreak. . . . . It was a miserable affair; they kept up a sharp fire of musketry for about half-an-hour, but I hear nobody was hit. . . . . I fear that the siege will, after all, be a very prolonged affair. A train of heavy guns has just started from Ferozepore, and cannot reach camp before the 10th September. This is most annoying, but I fancy those in authority know what is best. All idea of taking the town by escalade seems to have been laid aside. We shall have lost a great many men, but I cannot doubt the result. Our force would certainly be in jeopardy were the Sepoys to make a determined resistance in the

city and dispute the position in the streets and houses. But it is no use to speculate on what is not to be. . . . .

Diary, 12th August.—The enemy came out in force in the afternoon, and commenced firing rockets from Ludlow Castle. A few went well over the ridge, and, had they been in the proper direction, would have come into and perhaps over camp. Their practice at the mosque from the Moree Bastion was perfect; every shot hit the building, or near it. Whilst I was there a shell burst in the open space between the battery and mosque. Baird Smith, and young Nuthall, who had, about three hours before, arrived from Roorkee, were slightly wounded.

13th August.—This morning was awoke by a heavy musketry fire at the Metcalfe picquets. The Pandays kept it up for about half-an-hour, but finding that our men were awake, they kept a respectable distance, and walked off as the day dawned; they are a contemptible worrying crew. They have perseverance, certainly, to recommend them, but they never make a semblance of a stand when we advance. Last safe day for overland Letters. I have written a short note, and enclosed Maisey's design for the "Delhi Medal," a "European soldier rampant," on a "Panday couchant," with palm-trees and Jumma Musjid in the back-ground. Going to dine to-night with 4th I.C.[1] Killed yesterday, 19; wounded, 101; missing, 5. This includes the casualties of the affair in the morning.

[1] Irregular Cavalry.

CHAPTER VI

AT THE TAKING OF DELHI

THUS far, as already indicated, the position of the British on the ridge was rather that of the besieged than the besiegers. The mutineers occupied the city in overwhelming numbers, and sallied out almost day by day to attack our small army. From the middle of August, however, the relative positions of the opposing forces began to change. On the 14th of that month Brigadier John Nicholson, with his movable column, marched into our camp. On the 24th he fought a considerable body of the enemy near Najufgurh, capturing many guns. On the 4th of September the long expected siege train arrived from up country, and no time was lost in placing the heavy guns in position. The bombardment of the walls and gates on the northern side of Delhi began on the 11th, and was kept up with such good effect, that on the 14th the assault was successfully delivered, the breach in the wall near the Cashmere Gate stormed, and the Gate itself blown up. In a few days every position of importance within the city walls was in our hands. On the 24th September we find Stewart writing to his wife from Head-quarters in the king's palace. It will be found that his letters

and diaries describe clearly all that came under his immediate observation.

Diary, 14*th August.*—The movable column, under Brigadier Nicholson, marched into camp this morning. H.M. 52nd Regiment, Wing H.M. 61st, 2nd Punjab Infantry under Green, and Bourchier's battery with 250 sowars of sorts. Green's corps was the admiration of all; they marched much steadier than any of the European regiments, even than H.M.'s 52nd. It is said that the two guns have been removed from before the Metcalfe stables. I fancy they took them off as soon as they had ascertained that our re-inforcements had arrived. Nothing new to-day in the shape of attacks. . . . .

15*th August.*—Captain Nixon[1] says that he has seen a despatch from the Governor-General, in which Lord Canning says that "he expects the army under General Barnard will do something more than repel the attacks of the mutineers." I wish he were here for a few hours and saw with his own eyes our position and our strength, and compared them with that of our opponents. People who ought to know better talk a deal of nonsense. Hodson started with his Cavalry and eighty Guides last night at twelve o'clock for the purpose of reconnoitring the road towards Soneput, where it is said that about 1500 men and two guns have gone. I don't myself believe that the Pandays are such fools as to send two guns drawn by bullocks such a distance from their stronghold.

16*th August.*—No news of Hodson as yet. Went up to right battery this morning, musketry fire rather sharp, a musket ball glanced off one of the 24-pounders and hit me on the leg. Fagan, who was on duty, said that he could now silence the Kishengunge battery or "the hole in the wall" in half an hour. The Pandays have constructed a slight breastwork across the road behind the bridge, leading from Hindu Rao's house to Trevelyan Gunge. Report received from

[1] Political agent in Rajpootana.

Hodson to-day, that he came across a party of twenty-five sowars at a village not far from Soneput; sixteen were killed on the spot. . . . .

Rained heavily to-day. Three men wounded were all the casualties this day.

17*th August.*—There was a heavy fall of rain this morning, but it cleared up again about twelve. Nothing going on to-day; a few shots were fired from the city and Kishengunge, but they were very soon shut up by our batteries. Our news writers from Delhi say that Sikh Sepoys are in the habit of going from our camp to the city during the night, and that a large party swam the Jumna and held communications with the rebels. I cannot believe the swimming part of the story, though it is quite possible they held communication with their brethren inside. Officers commanding corps of Sikhs are requested to make enquiries into the truth of this statement. It is more than probable that these stories are fabricated for the purpose of sowing distrust between us and the Sikhs. Two of the klassies, who were found tampering with the cartridges at the right batteries, were tried last night, and, being found guilty, were hanged this morning. They were quite unconcerned and regarded their fate as nothing. An officer of the 52nd Light Infantry was wounded this morning at the Crow's Nest. I fancy, being a new-comer, he was looking about him too freely, thinking that the Pandays could not reach him. . . .

18*th August.*—. . . . Pandays were quiet all day, little or no firing from either side. Played quoits in the evening with Maisey and Scott of the Artillery.

19*th August.*—Mrs Leeson, wife of a Mr Leeson, Uncovenanted service, son of Colonel Leeson of the 42nd, came into camp to-day from the city. It appears that she was wounded on the outbreak at Delhi. An Afghan, who found her, carried her to his house, where she was taken care of and cured; she says she was well treated in every respect. Poor creature, how thankful she must

be to get among Europeans again. I have not heard her story, but as she was sent to Mrs Tytler,[1] it will be told shortly. Mrs Tytler, it is supposed, is writing a book for publication. The Pandays are very quiet again. I visited the batteries on the ridge. The guns on the Kishengunge side keep up their fire by sending occasional shots at the ridge; they do little damage. The Moree battery is the best and most useful of all their positions; our guns do not appear to have done them any damage there. I see the Calcutta and Bombay papers seem very low that we do not take Delhi. I wish they would come and try their hand at it. The siege train cannot be here much before the 8th of next month. As soon as it arrives we shall commence in earnest, I fancy. The Governor-General's agent, Greathed, has, to-day, received letters from some of the royal family, who wish to show their loyalty to the British; they say they have assisted us in every way, and are willing to do anything to please the English. I fancy they see matters are not so flourishing in the city as they were, and that they will shortly be up a tree. These men will now receive no sympathy or protection from us; they have chosen their side, and they must take the consequences. A letter was received from Hodson whilst we were at dinner; he was rather in a fix at Rohtak, but he was still in the open, and in a position to get away whenever he wished. The people had sent for the guns and a force of Pandays for the purpose of cutting him off. By his going so far, he places the General in an awkward position. He must either let him get out of his difficulties the best way he can, or send a force to relieve him. He has chosen the latter plan, and has ordered Brigadier-General Nicholson and his Brigade, with 6 H.A. guns, and the

[1] Mrs Tytler, whose husband was in camp, had escaped from Delhi at the outbreak, and had joined the British Camp, in which she was allowed to remain, owing to the state of her health, when all other ladies were sent to the rear. She gave birth to a son in the camp. This lady, who was a skilful artist, was well known in Simla in after years.

2nd Punjab Cavalry to proceed towards Rohtak at twelve to-night.

20th August.—Brigadier-General Nicholson marched this morning. . . . . I don't know what his instructions are. . . . . Later, Brigadier Nicholson's column returned from Alipore as the road to the canal was impassable[1] for any sort of troops. Infantry could not have gone 5 miles over it. Would it not have been better to have made enquiries as to the practicability of the road first? . . . .

21st August.—No news to-day. Hodson is coming back. His "Alu-Bokharas[2]" have behaved well. It is very lucky that they were not regular sowars whom they came across. They were only villagers. About eighty or ninety of them have been cut up. . . . .

22nd August.—The Pandays opened a heavy fire this morning from all the city batteries and those on Selimgurh and across the river. Two field-pieces opened, but after a couple of rounds, they returned to the city at a gallop. The cause of this sudden move is not known. The Mohurrum commences to-day; but this being a Sunnee city (at least the king is of that sect), the festival is not so much observed as it would be in other parts. Went to the flag-staff tower, where we had a beautiful view of the town and ground; in front, large bodies of Cavalry were observed returning from the direction of Rohtak. Maisey was calmly sketching the flag-staff, with battery and figures in foreground. The river and distant horizon were brought in, and made a fine landscape. Reports from the city that there are constant and irritating dissensions among the leaders. . . . . The poor old fool of a king says he will come over to the English camp if they will not treat him better. The Sepoys are in want of money, and there is none in the royal treasury. The corps who have money take care to keep it to themselves,

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[1] From floods.

[2] The name of a native fruit, which the uniform of Hodson's Horse was supposed to resemble in colour. Hence the nickname of Hodson's men.

and will not allow any one to share the plunder with them. Some days ago about 800 men gave in their arms, and, with the king's permission, marched off to their homes. . . . .

23rd August.—News from Hansi this morning. Nine Sikh sowars attacked about 2500 Rangars at Hissar and beat them. Fagan shot a Panday elephant this morning with an 18-pounder shot, in the Subzi Mundi, or, rather, near the bridge leading to Trevelyan Gunge. The poor brute when shot tumbled into the canal. The night before last, our first parallel was opened from near the Sammy House, towards the Moree battery. I hope considerable progress will be made with this work before the siege train arrives. It reached Umballa yesterday, and should be this day one march on this side. There is a convoy of 500 waggon-loads of siege ammunition at Kurnal, and 700 loads with the train. A thousand rounds per piece have been ordered. This ought to bring Delhi about their ears; four 10-inch mortars are with the train. It will be a pretty sight to see them open on the city.

24th August.—Telegraphic message received last night that 10,000 troops were coming round the Cape, and that some had arrived in the steamer, *Pottinger*, from the Cape, at Bombay. Went up to the ridge this morning; smart fire from the Moree. Whilst in the battery saw a shot from Kishengunge go clean over the mosque and fall into the ground on the other side like a shell. I think no shot has, during the siege, come the same distance on any previous occasion. They have two or three heavy guns across the river. Still, instead of firing at Coke's camp they devote their attention to the Metcalfe picquet. Hodson's party returned this morning early. Rained a good deal whilst we were at the batteries. Reports from the city say that a large force has gone off towards Meerut. When they reached Shadera they sent back for their pay, and said they were unable to proceed without it. It is also reported that Mirza Moghul[1] has become traitor, and is being tried by court-martial! Fancy Panday ideas on court-martial!

[1] The heir-apparent of the old king.

What an extraordinary thing it is to think that they retain our old military customs. They take rank and precedence according to date of commission, and hold courts-martial. It is curious that among the many thousands of fine young soldiers who have joined the rebels, no one of them has in any way distinguished himself from the common herd. The leaders are still, as far as we know, the native officers of the corps, just as when they went over.

25th August.—A movable column marched this morning at 4 A.M. under Brigadier-General Nicholson. They are going to attack the Neemuch and Bareilly mutineers, who, with their guns and treasure, are said to be coming to our rear, or going towards Goorgaon. Another force went out from the city this morning. It is supposed they are to form a junction with the troops which left yesterday. I hope Nicholson may come across the rascals; but I doubt it, as they evidently, from the direction the column took, have some idea of moving southwards. . . . .

26th August.—Yesterday, Brigadier-General Nicholson attacked the Pandays near Najufgurh and captured eleven or twelve guns. Our loss was about forty or fifty. Lumsden of Coke's Corps killed[1] and Dr Ireland, Artillery, wounded dangerously.[2] . . . Our loss was greater than could have been expected, but it was owing to the stubbornness of the defence of a small village by the Pandays.[3] Coke's men could not take it at once, and the 61st, who were sent to support them, were kept at bay for some time. The troops were awfully knocked up. The quarter-master's arrangements for grog and food were very defective. . . . . The Pandays kept up a feeble attack on our right the whole day. They did little damage. An officer of the 4th Sikhs took his Sepoys to the mosque breastwork in sections, and had two of his men bowled over

[1] A younger brother of Sir Harry Lumsden. See p. 212 of "Lumsden of the Guides."

[2] Although Dr Ireland was dangerously wounded, he is now (1902) still alive.

[3] Our casualties were 2 officers and 23 men killed; 2 officers and 68 men wounded. The exact number of guns captured was 13.

by a round shot in consequence. A party of horsemen charged across the fields under the centre battery, and made a demonstration as if they intended to come up to Hindu Rao's house, and capture the battery. They were, however, received with grape and musketry; when they came near enough some saddles were emptied, and the remainder drew off.

27th August.—I went down to the park this morning to examine the guns; they were almost all spiked in the most masterly manner, but we can easily drill them out again. They are very quiet in the city to-day; only four guns have been discharged from their works this morning. . . . Yesterday the casualties were eight killed and thirteen wounded. . . . .

29th August.—Last night went up to the right battery after dinner, and remained there till half-past eleven. The men sang songs; some of them were most amusing. The comic gentleman came out very strong, and everything went well till they all joined in a chorus and sang as loud as they could, "The Red, White, and Blue." The Pandays evidently objected to the song, for they opened on the battery with grape shell and round shot. There was a feeble attack on the Sammy House and breastwork, which lasted about three-quarters of an hour. As it was subsiding we returned to the camp. I met General Nicholson near the mosque; he came up thinking he might be required. He has not yet become accustomed to these things. . . . . I wish the siege train had reached camp; the sickness is becoming most serious; the 61st had yesterday 222 men in hospital. . . . .

30th August.—. . . . News from the city is to the effect that the Pandays are to make a night attack; supports of Artillery and Infantry have been ordered to proceed to the ridge and right flank. . . . .

31st August.—The threatened attack last night was all in vain. I went up to the right battery in the morning, and had the felicity of seeing a very pretty skirmish between it and Kishengunge; our round shot was beautifully thrown into the enemy's battery. News yesterday from Agra.

The volunteers attacked some of Walidad's men near Hattras and killed some four hundred of them. Poor Tandy and young Marsh were killed; they were both gallant fellows, and always foremost when any real service was going on. They will be a loss to the volunteers. A lot of us intended to go up to the right battery and dine with Fagan this evening, but it has rained all day, and we shall, I fancy, give it up. . . . Maisey, Roberts, and I went up after all. We had a first-rate dinner, mushrooms stewed, currant tart, which we washed down with goblets of champagne, a contribution to the feast from Maisey and myself. We had the usual singing after dinner and returned about twelve o'clock.

1st September.—No news to-day; the Pandays very quiet. . . . . This morning at eight, shrapnel from across the river burst in the Metcalfe stables and knocked over a lot of people. Two of the 61st were killed and six wounded, also one Lancer and his horse, besides several natives. This is the first time any one has been hit by the guns from the other side of the Jumna. The siege train marched from Paniput this morning. . . . . May be here to-morrow or the day after.

2nd September. . . . . Woodcock arrived to-day; he is a brother of Mrs Donald Macleod of Dalvey;[1] he talks of going home and putting up at Dalvey Cottage. I wish I were going to the same place. . . . . The Pandays are most quiet; they have still a few dissensions among themselves. . . . .

3rd September. . . . . Maisey has this day commenced a capital caricature of the king's durbar. His Majesty is telling the native officers that they may all go and be hanged; that he did not send for them, and that, in fact, he did not want to have anything to do with them, for they only brought him to grief. The Native officers are to be depicted retiring with tears in their eyes, etc., etc.

4th September.—The siege train came in this morning; it consists of four 10-inch mortars, four 8-inch howitzers, six-

[1] A place near Forres.

24-pounder guns, eight 18-pounder guns, and seven hundred cart-loads of shot and shell. It is said that two 13-inch mortars are coming down from Umritsur. This, though telegraphed by Macpherson,[1] is not by any means certain. A wing of Belooches arrived this morning with the siege train. They are rather fine-looking men, dressed in green tunics, with red lapels on their coats—a very neat and serviceable uniform. Yesterday evening the Pandays had a little mortar practice at Ludlow Castle, whether at our working party or at the castle, where our new breaching battery is to be established, is not certain. . . . .

5th September.—Last night our working parties were under a constant fire of musketry. The Sappers and Pioneers, however, managed to clear a considerable space in front of the Observatory. This morning the General showed me his plan for assaulting Delhi. There are to be five columns—three for attacking, one in reserve, one under Reid, which will drive the enemy from Pahahrepore and assault the Lahore Gate. The fourth column is to be held in reserve, and the fifth will be under the command of Reid, and will consist of the main picquet garrison. The Chief engineer's plan for mounting and arming his batteries appears to be most hazardous, as the means at our command would certainly not admit of our constructing and arming batteries for 56 pieces of ordnance in one night. Our sick and wounded are increasing at an alarming rate. On this date there are sick 2425, and wounded 341—just an increase of 400 minus 2 since the 31st of last month.

6th September.—This morning about 200 of the 60th Rifles and nearly 100 Artillery came into camp from Meerut. . . . . Yesterday there was little firing, but one of the Guides was killed and three were wounded. They are always acting as a covering party for the workmen at the new batteries.

7th September.—Last night I went up with Norman and Johnson to the new siege-gun battery and witnessed

[1] Military secretary to the Punjab Government.

the process of arming it. There seemed to be a want of arrangement in bringing down the guns. . . . . While we were sitting in the battery the Pandays treated us to a few shell and round shot. No. 1 Heavy-gun battery is to be constructed and armed to-night. It will be an interesting sight. A large working party were last night employed in filling sandbags near the spot where the battery is to be.

8th September.—The Jhind troops came in yesterday morning, and have occupied the rear of the camp across the canal. Engaged all day in making arrangements for working and covering parties. We constructed and armed No. 1 battery as well as cleared off the jungle from the Koodsia Bagh. I did not get to bed till past three. I had to go all over camp for working parties. After this I went to the Koodsia Bagh to see the fun. We had a beautiful view of the river, and found large stacks of wood piled on the bank just under the garden wall. Our batteries opened with four guns only; but by twelve o'clock two more were mounted; and one was kept outside to rake the Trunk Road, on which they had light guns for enfilading our batteries. . . . .

9th September.—Nothing new to-day. A smart fire has been kept up on the Moree and Cashmere Gates, which have suffered a good deal. Our men, poor fellows, have been worked off their legs; but they do everything in the most cheerful manner. A working party of 1400 men ordered for this evening. It is expected that Nos. 2 and 3 batteries will be ready and armed by to-morrow morning. The mortar battery of four 10-inch and six 8-inch was ready this morning; but the engineers do not consider it advisable to open till the whole are ready, as they say the enemy do not know the position of the new batteries, and consequently can make no preparations, such as entrenchments. This argument seems to be sound; but the General is very angry at the delay that has taken place.

10th September.—Nos. 2 and 3 Heavy-gun batteries were finished and armed last night; the working parties in

the Koodsia Bagh were greatly annoyed by some guns, which the enemy brought down the river opposite the garden. . . . . About ten o'clock the Pandays came out of the Cashmere Gate and attacked our covering party; they were driven in by Coke's men, who made a rush at them, and sent helter-skelter into the town. Our loss was about ten men killed and wounded in this skirmish. . . . . A lot of Cavalry came out to-day, and rode along in front of our batteries, which turned them over with grape very nicely. Our loss yesterday was four killed and thirty-seven wounded, besides Pioneers, who are not accounted for, as they are not fighting men. Poor fellows, they are much exposed at times at the custom-house. It is just as warm as the most pugnacious could desire.

11th September.—This morning about 9.30 A.M. Nos. 2 and 3 batteries, with the mortar battery, opened on the town. Several of the heavy guns were not in position, but it was considered necessary to commence firing with what we had. The custom house, or No. 4 battery, is ready, and is being armed; but it strikes me that unless some sort of traverse is thrown up on the river-side, the guns on the other side of the Jumna will enfilade the entire battery. About three o'clock this morning, Norman and I went down to see the progress of the batteries, but found none of them armed. There were four or five guns in position in Nos. 2 and 3 batteries, but several of the platforms were wanting. The engineers seemed to think that the battery was completed, and appeared to consider me rather an ass than otherwise when I expressed a doubt as to their ability to be ready for guns within two hours. Our loss yesterday was, I fear, very heavy. . . . . Went to the Ludlow Castle Nos. 2 and 3 heavy batteries yesterday, and, having gone to the roof of the castle, had a beautiful view of the work. The Cashmere Gate parapet and guard-house suffered greatly; but I think the battery is too distant to make an effective breach.

12th September.—Scott's battery, or No. 4, which ought to have opened at daybreak, has, as yet, turned out a regular failure. They have now found out that they have

placed the embrasures where the guns cannot bear upon the water bastion. This will probably give the Artillery an extra day's hard work. . . . . All Brigadiers and Commanding officers are to assemble at the General's tent to-day at 11 A.M., for the purpose of receiving instructions for the assault, which will take place, I fancy, on the morning of the 13th. However, this will depend on the state of the walls. I don't suppose that any one expects a regular breach will be made; all the parties will have to take scaling ladders with them. I fancy that I ought to make my will to-day, as Maisey and Ewart have done; for there is no telling what may happen, and it would save Marina a deal of trouble were she to be made executrix. To-day all the Brigadiers and Commanding officers of corps were assembled at the General's quarters for the purpose of having instructions given them for the assault. Our casualties yesterday were not heavy. . . .

The following letter to Mrs Stewart, written at various dates from the 1st to the 13th September, deals, for the most part, with the same events as are detailed in the diary. The interest of both records, when the circumstances under which they were written are remembered, seems to preclude the omission of either one or the other.

CAMP BEFORE DELHI, *1st September* 1857.

. . . We are very busy just now preparing for the siege train which will be in camp to-morrow. The first covering battery is ready, just under Hindu Rao's house and about 800 yards from the Moree bastion. . . . . The mutineers are, in fact, much more formidable than could have been expected. General Havelock, who went within a short distance of Lucknow, has returned to Cawnpore without effecting the release of the garrison beleaguered there. What a blow to the hopes of the gallant fellows shut up at

that place! My only fear is that their ammunition will fail them. As we have had no letters from Cawnpore for some time, it is to be hoped that by this time the siege has been raised, and the defenders of Lucknow are safe in Havelock's camp. Till Delhi falls it will be impossible to conceive what the plans of the mutineers will be. If they escape with their field-guns we shall have to fight them over and over again till these are captured. I hope no quarter will be given to the wretches, who, to this day, are murdering our officers whenever they have an opportunity. I hear that, at Segowlie, the 12th Irregular Cavalry have just massacred Major and Mrs Holmes and Dr and Mrs Garner. You may remember meeting the former couple at Mrs Newbolt's. She is Lady Sale's daughter. This corps had up to a very late date been doing very good service, and was supposed to be staunch, but see the result! . . . . We shall have fifty-six pieces of ordnance at work on the defences of Delhi in a day or two. They are to batter the walls for two days and two nights, and the assault is to take place on the morning of the third day. I fancy that after the town is taken, I shall go on as Assistant Adjutant-General of the pursuing column, which will probably be under the command of Brigadier-General Nicholson. . . .

6th September.

I did not write much yesterday, I am so often interrupted that I cannot make any sort of connected story. The siege train, having arrived, will be brought into use in a few days. In fact one of our batteries is to be armed to-night. When the three are ready they will pound away without intermission for forty-eight hours. . . .

7th September.

Last night I went up to see the new battery armed. It was a very interesting and exciting sight, particularly as, in the midst of the operations, the people

in the city got wind of what was going on and opened fire on the works. They fortunately did no damage. We stayed until after twelve o'clock, and then rode back to camp by moonlight, which was unusually bright. To-night one of the breaching batteries is to be constructed and armed. If it is successfully completed, No. 2 will be ready to-morrow night, and No. 3 the following; and two days afterwards I hope to be able to tell you that "delenda est Delhi." . . . . From the first I made up my mind, and I have done everything in my power to join this Army, and I succeeded. Had I waited for Sir Patrick Grant I should, at this moment, have been boxed up in the Fort at Agra with the officers of the Corps, doing nothing, and not likely to do anything. I have been rewarded for my enterprise. . . . . The Native troops who have stuck to us have fought, some of them in particular, as well, as the Europeans. The only Cavalry that has done anything has been that of the Guides, who are acknowledged by Cavalry officers to be the best in camp for the service required of them. The last letter from Cawnpore says that Havelock is still there doing nothing; he does not feel strong enough to relieve Lucknow, and the Governor-General has retained the re-inforcements he expected. Should any misfortune happen to the small force at Lucknow, eternal disgrace will fall not only on General Havelock, but upon Lord Canning;[1] for another such massacre as that at Cawnpore will do more to injure our prestige than the loss of a pitched battle. . . . . At this moment there is no regular communication with Lucknow; but letters are daily passing between Cawnpore and that place by means of kossids. The Patiala and Jhind rajas' troops have this day come into camp under Colonel Dunsford. They are to protect the rear of our camp; and the

[1] The re-inforcements were detained, not by Lord Canning, but, by the authorities at various stations on the line of march, where the position was regarded as sufficiently critical to justify the temporary employment of the relays in course of transmission from Calcutta to the camp.

Jummoo troops, under charge of Captain Dick Lawrence,[1] join us to-morrow morning. These auxiliary levies will not be of much use; but they will protect a portion of our position, whilst the English troops are engaged in the final attack. . . .

9th September.

I have no time to continue my letter now, as every moment is taken up with my official duties. The troops are worked off their legs;[2] they are engaged day and night in constructing and arming batteries; but they have all, European and Native, behaved with the greatest spirit and zeal. We shall open in full force to-morrow morning and assault the following day, or the day after at all events. The weather for some days has been awfully hot, and our poor fellows are sickly to a degree; but notwithstanding all they have had to undergo, they are in high spirits and never flag. They deserve to be rewarded handsomely when all is over. When the mortar batteries open this evening it will be most exciting. I like to see the 10-inch shells hovering about over the city; it will be a lesson to the town people, who deserve punishment for their cowardice in allowing the mutineers to take possession of the city. I think they are as much to blame as the troops, and I have no doubt that, during the assault, many of them will be killed. I only hope the women and children may escape, though in the *mêlée* many victims will fall. As yet everything has gone on well, and we have not had a single mishap. We found last night that the position of one of our batteries was faulty, and that it could not be constructed on the ground intended, but this was of no consequence, as the siege can be conducted to the end without it. Yesterday afternoon we were alarmed by hearing a shell burst in the middle of camp. . . .

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[1] Youngest brother of Lord Lawrence, afterwards Resident of Nepal.

[2] On the 11th September 3070 soldiers of the Delhi force were in hospital from wounds and sickness.

12th September.

For some days I have not been able to add a line to this. I have not for two days had a regular dress, and have only had a very few hours of sleep this morning. All the batteries are now in full play. The last, however, was only opened this afternoon. I went down last evening and had a capital view from Ludlow Castle of the town walls, which were about 400 yards off, but the nearest of our batteries is only 180 yards from the water bastion. To-day all the Brigadiers and Officers commanding regiments attended at the General's tent for the purpose of getting their instructions for the assault. I expected that Delhi would have been in our hands by this time, but the engineers were unable to execute what they promised. All the batteries were, according to their ideas, to be opened in one night; whereas with working parties of 2000 for every day, they were only just able to complete the batteries in four days. I must say good-bye, as I am going off to the front to see what progress has been made since I was last there. . . .

13th September.

. . . I am sorry I have not been able to give you an account of the storming of Delhi, which will take place, I fancy, to-morrow morning, as the General has asked me to go over after breakfast and settle the details of the columns of attack. Yesterday poor Fagan of the Artillery was shot dead in Scott's battery, a needless death. He *would* show himself over the mantlet of the guns within 150 yards of the hottest fire of musketry I have ever witnessed. The other officers and men told him not to expose himself, but he said they could not hit him. He was a gallant officer, and always the life of the battery in which he was working. I fancy no officer in the force will be more regretted; during this siege he has shown that he possessed every quality of a good soldier excepting caution.

. . . . . .

Diary, 14th Sept.—We assaulted the city this morning at five o'clock. Two columns, Nicholson's—

300	. . .	75th Foot.
200	. . .	1st Fusiliers.
450	. . .	2nd Punjab Infantry
950		

and Campbell's went in at the Cashmere breach. Campbell's column—

200	. . . .	52nd.
250	. . . .	Kumaon Battalion.
450	. . . .	1st Punjab Infantry.
900		

. . . . Nicholson, with the 1st column, pushed on to the Burn bastion, where the road is narrow, and the column was met with such showers of grape that they were obliged to fall back on the Cabul Gate, which, with the whole of the northern part of the city, fell into our hands, as far as the College. Colonel Campbell advanced and took possession of the Bank Garden, and even proceeded part of the way to the Jumma Musjid; but he was obliged to fall back. . . . . Our loss was great, and will amount to more than 1100 men I fear; it would have been much less had there been no liquor found in the shops. The Rifles were found lying with their throats cut in several parts of the town, and it is well known that the natives tried to give the Europeans drugged rum from mussucks.[1] The magazine was evacuated at first, but, as we did not make any effort to take it and keep it, the Pandays at once retook it in force, so that we had to make a breach in the wall, and storm it with the 61st—Wilde's corps—and the Belooches. The number of officers killed and wounded to-day was very great, sixty-four in all. Eight were killed or died before night.[2]

[1] Waterskins.

[2] The total loss was 66 officers and 1104 men killed or wounded, exclusive of the loss sustained by the Cashmere contingent.

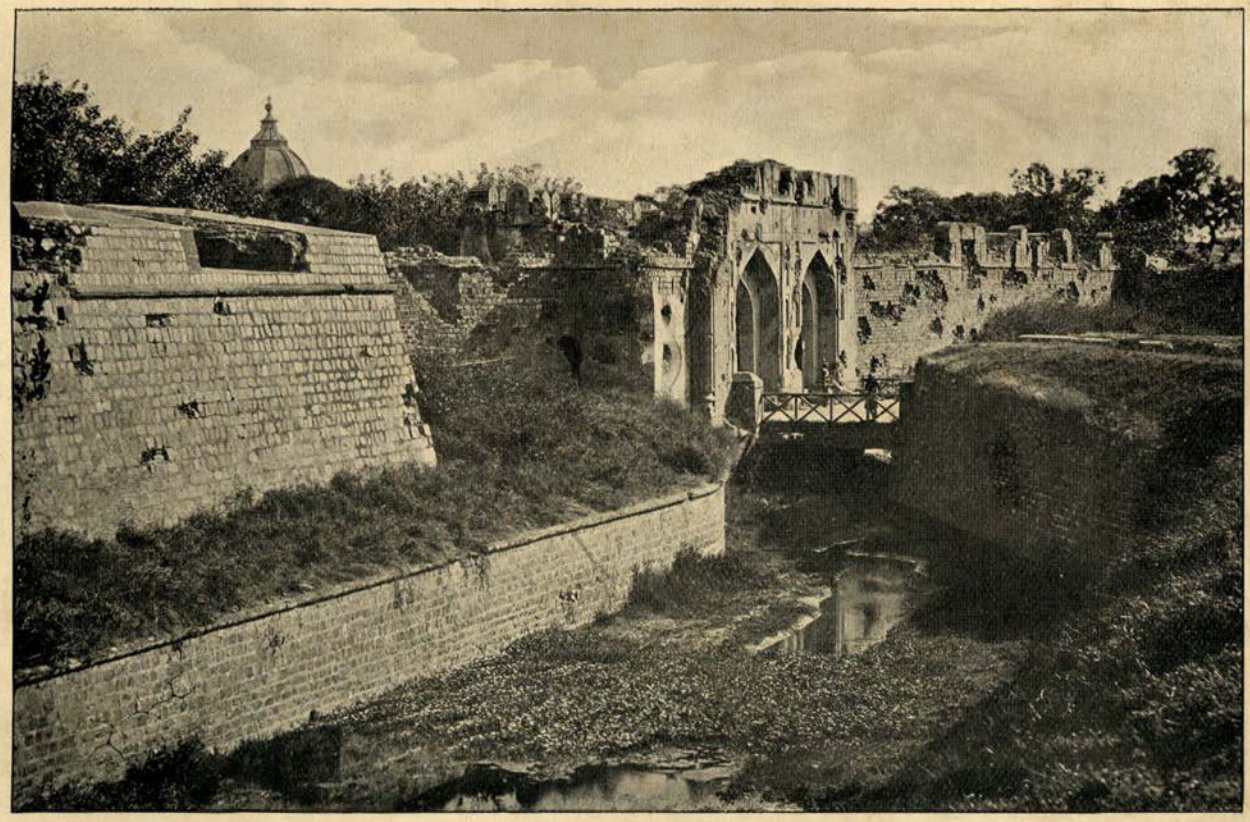
15th Sept.—Last night the Sappers were employed in making a battery for a heavy gun through the College gateway, so as to bear on the magazine, and at daybreak they opened on the wall. The columns named in my report yesterday were ordered to assault the magazine at daybreak, and did so. I went in after them and went on to the wall, beyond which there is a Martello Tower with a traversing gun. We saw few of the enemy at first; they kept pretty snug, and fired only at first from the palace walls; but, seeing that we appeared satisfied with keeping the magazine, they swarmed round us like bees, and peppered into the magazine gate at such a rate that one could hardly pass from the magazine to the workshop on the opposite side of the road. We threw up a sand-bag breastwork, however, which partially protected the gateway.

16th Sept.—This morning at dawn we took the magazine with no loss, only three men wounded. . . . .

17th Sept.—This afternoon went round to the Cabul Gate with Bobs, and got Greathed to advance his post to the left till they joined those of Colonel Jones. These two columns were within 300 yards of each other, and they did not know it. Yesterday and to-day the men have been getting a little rest from work and drink, which, next to plunder, has been the principal cause of the failure of some of our projects.

18th Sept.—This day we advanced again to the Bank and took possession of the house with the 60th Rifles and a few natives. . . . . Our picquets were gradually advanced to-day to a large native house between Abbott's house and the magazine, but on the bank of the canal—a strong good position.

19th Sept.—The General, who went up to camp yesterday to get some rest, returned this morning, and began to bother about returns, etc. He is still looking shaky. This morning, Jones of the Rifles took possession of Abbott's house, also Mahomed Khan's. We were from the latter fired upon by a few scoundrels who were on the top of a high house between us and the palace. Our men afterwards took the rest of the city to the left as



The Cashmere Gate, Delhi, after the Siege. [*To face page* 108.

far as the river. We, after cruising about in the neighbourhood of the palace, went to the Cabul Gate and amused ourselves for some time. Burnside to-day, while standing near the mortars at the Cabul Gate, was struck by a round shot which glanced off a tree and fell on his head. . . . .

20th Sept.—Poor Greathed of the C. S., one of the strongest and healthiest-looking men in camp, died of cholera last night. He was only attacked in the morning. Sir. T. Metcalfe and Captain Rothney were likewise attacked, but are both doing well to-day. Yesterday afternoon our troops took the Burn bastion, and are now within 100 yards of the Lahore Gate, which is quite undefended, and will now easily be taken. . . . . To-day we took entire possession of the city and palace together with Selimgurh. We took all without a show of opposition. A good many of the budmashes held out to the last, and even fired one or two guns occasionally in front of the palace. . . . . The king and his whole family have fled with the rest of the city people, and many thousands of them are now at Humayoon's tomb, on the road between Delhi and the Kootub, where there is great difficulty in feeding them. . . . .

21st Sept.—The Head Quarters moved to-day into the palace. . . . .

22nd Sept.—. . . . The people seem very glad to have done with the mutineers; doubtless many of the Goojurs and others who battened on the plunder of all parties are sorry that our rule has been in some measure established in these parts. A movable column, consisting of 9th Lancers, 200 Hodson's Horse, the detachments 1st, 2nd, and 5th Punjab Cavalry, H.M. 8th and 75th, the 2nd and 4th Punjab Infantry, two troops Horse Artillery, and Bourchier's battery of Artillery, were ordered to march towards Muttra in pursuit, the whole under command of Colonel Greathed of the 8th. By some mismanagement the columns could not march at the time appointed, and thus valuable time was lost. Norman and Roberts accompany the party.

23rd Sept.—The Belooch Battalion and the Mooltanee Horse are to proceed towards Meerut, where the former is

to be stationed. The latter is then to rejoin the force in Delhi.

The diary may be said to end here, the few remaining notes being unimportant.

The next letter to Mrs Stewart, dated 24th September, is written from the king's palace, where the Head Quarters were established.

Captain Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

DELHI PALACE, *24th September* 1857.

You will not have been alarmed about me, as you must have seen in the papers the names of those who were killed and wounded. Many a gallant fellow bit the dust on the 14th. Our loss was exactly 1170 killed and wounded, including 64 officers. Our chief loss is in Brigadier-General Nicholson. He was wounded whilst leading on his column, and has since died. . . . . His loss at this particular juncture is deplored by the whole army. It was generally believed that he was to lead the pursuing column, a duty for which his determined energy peculiarly suited him. His place has been taken by Colonel Greathed of the 8th Foot. . . . . The movable column have gone after the rebels towards Aligurh. I hope they will come up with them and beat them till they have not a gunshot remaining. The old king of Delhi is a prisoner in our hands; his three sons were captured by Hodson and shot by his own hand. I hear they deserved their fate, for they actually, with their own hands, aided in the massacre of our countrymen and women in this city. The wretched old king, some ninety years of age, will drag out the remainder of his days in poverty and disgrace. The mutineers fought with desperation so long as they held the city; but they no sooner made a start in retreat than they scampered off, abandoning camp equipage, guns, clothing, arms, and ammunition. They intend, I hear, to make a stand either at Aligurh or at Anoopshahr, which is about 30 miles further up the Ganges. They are evidently making for Oudh. By this time, I trust, the

unfortunate garrison of Lucknow will be relieved by General Havelock. They have held out nobly, and it would be an everlasting disgrace to our name were anything to happen to them before their relief. To return to the capture of Delhi, we failed the first day in taking the whole town, and had even in one or two places to give way and retire; but we took up a judicious line of defence, holding two gates and a large portion of the town. We, by degrees, advanced our posts, till on the 20th we took the whole town, palace, and fort of Selimgurh, with the magazine and about 270 guns. All this was not done without loss; but when it is considered that we had not more than 4000 Infantry in the field, the greater portion of them natives, the faintest of our admirers must admit that this army has nobly done its duty. . . . I cannot conceive why people should persist in supposing that Delhi was an open town surrounded with garden walls! I only wish that those who think so had been a few hours in one of our batteries after the trenches were regularly opened. However, the casualty list will open the eyes of the British public, and the Government too. . . . The fact is, that no Artillery ever fought better than that of the rebels; some well-known pugarees[1] were seen working the guns on the walls under a shower of shot, shell, and musketry that would have done credit to heroes. Had their Infantry and Cavalry fought nearly as well as their Artillery, we should not now have been here, I can assure you. . . .

A glimpse of Stewart about this time is given by Mr George Ricketts, whose visit to Delhi, soon after the siege, has already been mentioned. He writes:—

"I found my way to Delhi on or about the 22nd September 1857, and it was then for the first time that I met Donald Stewart. . . . . I was Neville Chamberlain's guest. There was a sort of Head Quarters' mess which

[1] Turbans.

I joined. Some one got me a charpoy[1] from the bazaar, and the Dewan Khas was our mess-room and sleeping quarters for several of us, and gorgeous quarters they were—with the night wind blowing through from across the river—cool and delicious. I was there only for a few days on leave given me by my Commissioner, and my time was spent in riding all about the place and neighbourhood on horseback, or on a camel, an excursion to the Kootub and Humayoon's tomb, and so forth. In none of these did Stewart share, for he had his work and office, and we met only at mess, morning and evening, and combined at night to fling boots, and whatever else we could get, at some persistent pariah dogs, who would forage under the table and all about that famous hall,[2] within a few feet of the great crystal block (now at Windsor), the former base of the famous peacock throne. Then we met again when he came up with Sir Colin Campbell and the army Head Quarters, to Futehgurh, when Sir Colin came up to take the command of the column, ordered to recover Rohilkund. .... Stewart, with his never-ceasing fun and high spirits was the life of the mess, especially when he took old Billy Russell[3] in hand, and told him all that was (or was not) going on in the camp and country.

"Stewart's regiment (9th Native Infantry) was notoriously a very good well-disciplined regiment, and the credit, that it was so, was due to Stewart, who had been Adjutant for many years, and was a brevet Captain in the regiment. Though an exceptionally good officer, he never had interest to get away on Staff employment, and he never lost his faith in the efficiency of the Panday Sepoy. I have heard him say, more than once, and in comparatively late years, that he would have done any soldier's work of any sort most gladly with some of his old Sepoys, and this works round to the old old story, that it was the maladministration of the army, the rigid

[1] *I.e.* native bed.

[2] In the king's palace.

[3] Dr W. H. Russell, the correspondent of the *Times*.

seniority system for officers and men, from the top to the bottom, that simply insured the impossibility of having efficient men in command or in responsible positions, and this led to perpetual interference by the Head Quarters' Staff. They knew the regiments were all commanded by incompetent worn-out officers, so they took all real power out of their hands. . . . . I have entered all this rigmarole about the state of the army when the mutiny occurred, for I think it tended to form Stewart's character. He was brought up under it, he knew the *personnel* of the army thoroughly, and he had suffered under it. In later years, when he rose to power, it made him the strong efficient commander he turned out.[1]

After the taking of Delhi, Stewart remained there for some months with the Adjutant-General's office, and did not join the column which, on the 24th September, left Delhi, followed up the enemy in their flight, re-occupied Aligurh and other places, relieved Agra, and, after reaching Cawnpore, moved into Oudh, there to await Sir Colin Campbell's arrival from Calcutta for the advance to the relief of Lucknow.

Captain Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

DELHI, 25*th October* 1857.

Yours of the 8th September I got last night, as I was on my way to dine with the 61st Foot, who were giving an entertainment to General Penny, our new commander. I sat in the post-office and read it at once by the light of a bit of rag dipped in oil. . . . . The people will not be pleased at home when they hear that the king's life has been spared. Hodson guaranteed him his life, at General Wilson's request, he says: but General Wilson denies it. . . . . I am beginning to feel uneasy and

[1] For an incident connected with the mutiny of the 9th Native Infantry as related by Mr Ricketts, see Appendix III.

unsettled about the future, for the days of the Delhi Field Force are numbered, and I shall be without employment of any sort. . . . .

The force at Lucknow is in some measure besieged, and the column, we sent down from this, will not be able to do much more than enable them to hold their own. It is not strong enough to allow them to assume the offensive, but re-inforcements are arriving every day, and by Christmas we expect to have some 87,000 Europeans in India. This will not be a man too many. The country people, who believe nothing they do not see, will not, in many parts of India, credit that we have captured Delhi. There is a long and arduous campaign before our troops yet, both in Rohilkund and Bundelkund; and in many of the independent states, the troops have risen and murdered the political officers. It was only on the 15th of this month that the Agent at Kotah, Major Burton, and his family, were killed at Jodhpore. This is very melancholy, particularly as people fancied the fall of Delhi would have kept the whole of Rajpootana quiet. . . . .

Captain Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

DELHI, *October* 1857.

. . . . Ford, who has come in from Hansi, gives a very favourable account of the state of the country. It is much more quiet than could have been supposed, after being overrun by a horde of horsemen, who did nothing but plunder, wherever they went. The people who fed the Delhi mutineers should, in my opinion, be punished; but now that the danger is over, it appears to be the intention of those in authority to extend the hand of mercy to all concerned. It is impossible, even were it politic, to exterminate all who were disaffected to our rule; but it is our bounden duty to punish the ringleaders, however numerous. Hindustanis will not, for a long time, be trusted; they have behaved with great treachery towards us, and deserve to be entirely kept out from any employ under Government. The Sikhs have stuck to us in a very wonderful manner; but, had the siege of Delhi not

come to a close at the time it did, I suspect they would have been up in the Punjab, and given us a deal of trouble.

Captain Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

DELHI, *23rd December* 1857.

. . . . Brigadier Chamberlain has given up the appointment of Adjutant-General, and has been succeeded by Major Mayhew. Norman has been made Deputy-Adjutant-General. He has, moreover, written to me, and says that Sir Colin Campbell will put me into the Adjutant-General's office provided Mayhew does not object. My chance is, I think, a good one; still I do not quite build upon it, as the disappointment would be great if I were unsuccessful. I hope to hear whether I am to get it or not by the time this leaves me. You must not therefore fancy that I have got what has always been the object of my ambition till you hear that my name has been sent to Government. It is very satisfactory to know that, even if I do not get the appointment, I shall get something else, if Norman, who is all in all with Sir Colin, can do it for me. Norman has truly been the best friend I have ever had, and I am sure I don't know why, for we saw very little of him at Peshawur. I am almost about to *persuade myself* that *modest merit* sometimes obtains its reward. You will be awfully proud of me if I get into the Adjutant-General's office, won't you? I am pretty certain that I should never have done so without Norman's recommendation; so that interest, as it always does, carries the day. Sir John Lawrence has also come round and has offered me Coke's corps, which I would gladly have taken; but you may be sure I was delighted to be able to reply to his telegraph message that I would accept the appointment provided that I did not get the other. Macpherson,[1] in reply, said: "You are sure of the appointment; the Adjutant-General cannot object."

[1] Sir John Lawrence's military secretary.

CHAPTER VII

IN THE OUDH AND ROHILKUND CAMPAIGNS

Soon after the date of the letter with which the last chapter closed, Donald Stewart left Delhi and proceeded to join the Head Quarters of the army under circumstances described by Sir Henry Norman. Sir Henry also gives a rapid sketch of Stewart's life during the Oudh and Rohilkund campaigns, and of his service with the Head Quarters camp at Allahabad and elsewhere, until its arrival at Simla in the spring of 1859.

Note by Sir Henry Norman.

It was my good fortune to leave Delhi on the 24th September with the column which, following up the enemy in their flight from Delhi, re-occupied Aligurh and other places, relieved Agra, and, after reaching Cawnpore, moved into Oudh to relieve Lucknow as soon as the Commander-in-Chief, Sir Colin Campbell, joined us from Calcutta, and some re-inforcements had closed up. I was thus separated from Stewart, who remained at Delhi; but after we had relieved Lucknow and driven the enemy away from Cawnpore, the Commander-in-Chief announced to me that I was promoted from second Assistant Adjutant-General of the army to be Deputy Adjutant-General. There was thus a vacancy at Head Quarters, and the Commander-in-Chief did me the honour to ask if I knew of a suitable

officer to bring to the post. I told him of Stewart's peculiar fitness, and of his services at Delhi, and he at once nominated him. We were, at the moment, cut off from communication with Delhi; but we soon moved towards the north-west, and on the 2nd January 1858, occupied Futehgurh, soon after which Stewart was able to join Head Quarters. The Commander-in-Chief was entirely satisfied with him, and I had the great pleasure of his assistance and companionship in subsequent service. It must, however, be noted as singular that, while I was only a regimental lieutenant during the whole of the war, with official rank as major, Stewart was a captain, and from the 19th January 1858, a brevet major, and from the 20th July 1858, a brevet lieutenant-colonel. He was, therefore, undoubtedly my senior officer, though departmentally my assistant, and he took precedence of me in social functions. This rather anomalous position in which we stood to each other never caused the slightest friction between us, and I thought myself very fortunate in having such a very able and reliable assistant and such a staunch friend always at hand. Soon after Stewart joined, we marched to Cawnpore with Head Quarters, and as soon as the siege train, which had come from Agra and Allahabad, had crossed into Oudh, we followed, and on the 2nd March took up our position opposite Lucknow. Throughout the siege, Stewart and I had to carry on all the duties of the department of the Adjutant-General of the army, and this involved most heavy and continuous work.

Routine was carried on at Calcutta; but all correspondence in our branch of the staff, which required the attention of the Commander-in-Chief, had to come to us to be submitted and be disposed of. We had to issue the general orders to the army in the field, and to see that they reached all portions of the army, to prepare statements showing the strength of each battery and corps, and where it was, and also a return of all casualties of the previous day. With a great army, such as we had at Lucknow, scattered over

many miles of country, from the Alam Bagh on the Cawnpore road to the Head Quarters' camp near the Dilkooshah, and across the River Goomtee, to Outram's force to the north of Lucknow, was no easy matter. We generally had long rides, morning and evening, to different posts, and endless interviews with officers, who came for information or orders. Luckily, we kept our health. On the 3rd March our rear column and Artillery Park joined us, under command of General Walpole, and on that day (and subsequent days) siege operations commenced.

On the 5th March General Franks, who had marched through Oudh from Benares, joined with a brigade of British Infantry and some battalions of Gurkhas of the Nepal army, and on the following morning, General Outram, with a strong brigade of Cavalry, a division of Infantry, and a powerful Artillery, crossed the River Goomtee by a cask bridge, and moved up the river and to his right, thus menacing Lucknow from the north side. Operations were then carried on by troops on both sides of the River Goomtee, and by the 21st March Lucknow was entirely in our hands. From that date to the 14th April various detachments were sent out in different directions, and arrangements were made for housing the large body of troops intended to occupy Lucknow, and for bringing the whole city under fire from our guns and mortars, and clearing roads for the easy passage of our troops through the city.

On the 14th April, Head Quarters moved towards Cawnpore, and thence to Futehgurh, from which an advance was to be made into Rohilkund for the subjugation of that province. Meanwhile, while the Commander-in-Chief was marching up from Cawnpore, General Walpole, with about four thousand men, moved through Oudh, and, after one fight in which we lost one of the best officers of the army—Brigadier Adrian Hope—and a skirmish, Walpole effected a junction with the Commander-in-Chief. General Penny at the same time crossed the Ganges into Rohilkund with about 1800 men, intending to join the Commander-in-Chief

before the latter reached Bareilly. Penny, however, was, unfortunately killed on a night march, during which he and his advanced guard fell into an ambuscade; but his troops joined Army Head Quarters, as arranged, the Chief, having, meanwhile, left a small force to hold Shahjehanpore. At the same time Brigadier John Jones, with nearly 3000 men, had entered Rohilkund from the north-west, and, after some small engagements, approached Bareilly, as the Commander-in-Chief arrived there from the other side. The enemy in considerable force opposed the advance of the Commander-in-Chief, but were defeated, and next day Bareilly was occupied and the two forces joined hands.

While this was going on, a large force of the enemy had attacked Colonel Hale, of the 82nd Regiment, in command at Shahjehanpore, and forced him to retire into the gaol. Bareilly being in our hands, Brigadier Jones was despatched to relieve Hale, which he effected; the Commander-in-Chief soon followed to Shahjehanpore, and on the 27th May reached Futehgurh, leaving Rohilkund well garrisoned. This short campaign did not cost us a large loss in killed and wounded; but the heat was most intense, and large numbers of our men died or were seriously disabled from *coup de soleil*. Other bodies of troops, still in the field, suffered in a similar manner, and it is on record that during the month of May, 1858, without any epidemic such as cholera, no less than 1000 of H.M.'s European soldiers died within the limits of the Bengal Presidency; that is, the loss by death in one month was equivalent to about 25 per 1000, or at the rate of 300 men per 1000 per annum.

After a short stay at Futehgurh, Army Head Quarters moved to Allahabad, where the Governor-General had already established himself, and here work was carried on uninterruptedly until the opening of the cold season. In various parts of India operations could not be altogether suspended during the great heat, as the enemy were active in some quarters; but after the great heat passed away and the rains commenced, our troops occupied

places which up till that time had been held by the enemy, and this was notably the case in Oudh, where, by order of the Commander-in-Chief, Sir Hope Grant occupied Fyzabad and Sultanpore, with some other places of less importance. Of the campaign in Oudh, which was directed by the Commander-in-Chief, from October, 1858, until January, 1859, nothing need be said. I was ordered to accompany Sir Colin, with as small an office establishment as I could do with, but no officer of my department was allowed to go with me. Much as I desired on every ground, public and private, to have Stewart with me, he had to remain at Allahabad with the Head Quarter offices. During that campaign, in which we often made small rapid marches, I was over-worked, owing to my having no assistant, and I grieved over his absence. In the end of April, 1859, Head Quarters reached Simla, and there our office was once more re-united, and Mrs Stewart soon rejoined her husband from England, to which place she had taken her children early in 1856.

The following extracts from letters to Mrs Stewart illustrate and expand, in an interesting manner, many parts of the preceding narrative. It is to be regretted that the letters of this period, which have survived, are not more numerous, and that they come somewhat abruptly to an end in October 1858.

Captain Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

CAMP ALIGURH, *8th January* 1858.

This morning I heard that the departure of the mail had been postponed from the 17th to the 24th January, so I take advantage of the opportunity to tell you that my name has been sent to Government for the appointment of second Assistant Adjutant-General of the army, and I have been ordered to join the Chief's camp at Futehgurh. I asked Macpherson by telegraph to send

you a line by Marseilles; that was on the 5th, two days after the latest safe date from Delhi. As I did not get Norman's letter till then, I could not before let you know. I ought to be very thankful to Norman, as it was he and no one else who got me into the department, and here I am now settled for life, I fancy. . . . .

I must now in a few words tell you about my own movements. Three days ago I got Norman's letter ordering me down, and the next morning, or rather that night, my servants and horses started, and I expect them here this forenoon. I shall send them on again to-night, and shall follow by mail-cart in a day or two. I hope to catch the camp at Futehgurh, but whether I shall be successful enough to get there before Sir Colin moves I know not. . . . .

Major Stewart[1] *to Mrs Stewart (as are all following letters in this chapter.)*

CAMP CAWNPORE *13th February* 1858.

. . . . Little Bobs is here. . . . . I believe Hope Grant has recommended him for the Victoria Cross, and he stands a good chance of getting it, too. It appears he captured a standard in one of their fights coming down country. He is now out with Hope Grant, who is going on a secret expedition after the Nana, I expect. I hope he will catch him, for I should like to see him hanged before going at Lucknow. There is a report in camp that Maun Sing, one of the Oudh chiefs, has given up several prisoners to Jung Bahadur[2] or General Franks. Among them is one of the Misses Jackson and Mrs Orr, the two ladies who were lately in Lucknow. I hope that the report is true, as Sir Colin would not like to commence operations till they were given up. Maun Sing is a great rascal, but he has not murdered any one, and will be admitted to terms, I daresay.

[1] As stated by Sir Henry Norman, Stewart became a brevet major on the 19th January.

[2] The Commander-in-Chief of Nepal.

15*th February.*—This is a very tedious sort of existence we are now undergoing. Day after day we expect to be off, and are as often disappointed. I feel as if I were in the middle of a journey, and that I am making an unnecessary halt . . . and you know how I hate delay on these occasions.

The Commander-in-Chief has some object in view, no doubt; indeed, his plan is to stay here till the Bombay column, under Sir Hugh Rose, drives the rebels out of Calpee, when we shall have them between two fires.

All this time the rascals in Lucknow are left to their own devices, and, we are told, are fortifying the strongest positions in the town, intending to make a final stand there. It will be a glorious sight when the bombardment takes place. We shall have in the field 134 guns; the only difficulty will be in getting the whole into position in order that we may secure a concentrated fire. . . . .

18*th February.*

. . . The people at home seem to be thinking about nothing but the marriage of the Princess Royal. . . . The Government at home seem to suppose that the war is over, whereas we have still the strongest force in our front that has yet been encountered. Brigadier Hope Grant is now out after the Nana; but I fear he will elude him, as the Brigadier's force is too large and unwieldy to catch a man who never sleeps in the same place two consecutive nights, and who is only accompanied by a few sowars. . . . 21*st Feb.*—The Governor-General has come up to Allahabad, and has assumed charge of the North-West Provinces himself, and I suspect that the Civil Service will never again have the same power that they held before the rebellion. . . . 24*th Feb.*—We are now moving the siege train up to Lucknow, and will have it collected there about the 1st of next month. It is a very tedious business getting everything together, particularly when our movements depend somewhat upon those of others. We are now waiting for Jung Bahadur to close up on the other side of the river, so that, when we reach our position, the city may, in some measure, be surrounded,

We hear that the enemy has evacuated the city, and has occupied the "Kaiser Bagh" which has been strongly entrenched and fortified in every respect. Our guns will soon rout them out, I hope; though, to make the thing complete, we should hardly allow a man to escape. At all events, we ought not to permit them to take away a single gun. With all our endeavours we can only assemble about 18,000 men in front of Lucknow; but then it is the most perfect force ever collected in India. We shall have 139 guns in the field. This does not include the Gurkha troops under Jung Bahadur and Brigadier-General Franks. Last night we heard that Hope Grant attacked a village called Meeangunge, and took it after four hours' cannonade, and killed about 400 men. We had none killed and only about twenty wounded. . . . They are at it again somewhere, for I hear the guns at work in Oudh. I daresay it is General Outram at Alam Bagh. . . .

The following letter of 28th February 1858 was begun the day before reaching Bunterah; the concluding portion, dated 4th March, was written after the occupation of the Dilkooshah, and refers to Outram's engagement with the rebels on the north side of the Goomtee.

HEAD QUARTERS CAMP, *28th February* 1858.

. . . . The Chief has gone one march ahead towards Lucknow, and I am here with the heads of Departments doing nothing.

To-morrow we shall be within one march of Lucknow, at a place called Bunterah. It is about 5 miles on the Cawnpore side of Alam Bagh. Their siege train will be collected, and from that place we shall advance against the Pandays for, I hope, the last time. They evidently think their time is coming, for they have commenced their old Delhi trick of making daily attacks on General Outram's force. The Begum (whose I know not) who is at the head of affairs, came out herself on an elephant the day before

yesterday; but her army was beaten as usual. I have been making enquiries on all sides as to the part taken by my friend Mohsin Ooldowlah, but no one seems to know. However, I am happy to say that he is generally supposed to have been favourable to us, and suffered in consequence. If he is in confinement, as I hear he is, I shall be most happy to befriend him, or his son, who must now be fourteen or fifteen years of age. I am not very partial to natives at any time, but I cannot help liking a fellow who was so very fond of me. He was certainly the most gentlemanly native I have ever seen. It will be a great bore if I find out that my old friend has joined his brethren against us.[1] The weather is becoming very warm—just what I like if it would get no warmer; but every day it waxes hotter and hotter, and some of the lately arrived corps are beginning to suffer already. The Highlanders in their huge hats will never stand the climate, yet they still stick to their topees and kilts. I daresay the latter makes a very cool sort of uniform for warm weather.

I have just been reading the Home news of the 18th January. I see in it that the Delhi Brevet is expected on the Princess Royal's wedding-day. I wish it would come at once, as it makes a considerable difference to us, who expect something before Lucknow; otherwise we shall, perhaps, get only one step in rank for the whole campaign. The Chief is very angry because the only officers, who have got anything, as yet, from Delhi, have been three officers of the Queen's Service, who have all gone home, one of them at the very commencement of the siege. You will have seen that Colonel Becher, the Quarter-Master-General, has gone home on sick-leave, and that Macpherson, our Lahore friend, has been appointed Acting Quarter-Master-General. I don't know how Sir John Lawrence has managed to part with him at this particular time, as Mac is a most invaluable officer, and has done right well during this war. I shall be very glad

[1] Stewart here refers to an old gentleman of the Oudh royal family, whom he knew well when quartered at Lucknow in 1845, and who remained loyal to us.

to see him again. He is expected in camp this evening from Cawnpore. . . .

4th March.

We have been marching since I commenced this, and I have now little time for writing. Our Head Quarters have been established in the Dilkooshah Park within 1500 yards of the city, and we (*i.e.* Norman and myself) have got a capital room for an office. It would be perfect if it only had glass in the windows. As it is, there is plenty of dust flying about. I wish I had a plan of the city to send you; but I believe they are to be had in London for a few shillings, and you ought to get one. Lieutenant Moorsom's is the best. It would enable you to understand our operations more clearly than any amount of writing could do. I came up here yesterday morning, having been up all the previous night. Our whole force is now assembled, so we shall begin the serious part of our work at once, and Sir Colin is not the man to waste his time unnecessarily. The Pandays were regularly taken by surprise on our arrival on this ground. They had only a small picquet and some three guns in advance; but our Cavalry and Horse Artillery were so sharp down upon them, that they could not take away two of their guns, which were captured. There is great rivalry between the Royal and Bengal Artillery. Major Tombs rather opened the eyes of the former by taking his troops at full gallop over a 3-foot-high wall with a ditch on each side. The same place rather puzzled the 9th Lancers, who were with him, and some of them got thrown at the same jump, but nothing can stop the Bengal Horse Artillery. The Royals did splendidly, however, when they got into action. I fancy that our plan of attack will be to cross the river and enfilade their works along the canal, which is a strong position and the side, by which we must enter the town to get at the Kaiser Bagh, which is their stronghold. I enclose a small sketch. This may not be our exact plan of attack, but it is the best that, in my opinion, can be done —the best, I mean, for the troops attacking.

6th March.

. . . . . A large force went across the river to-day under Sir James Outram. They attacked the Pandays between the cantonment and city, and cut up a good many of them. Major Percy Smith of the 2nd Dragoon Guards has been killed. I fear the affair was not over well managed; some of our poor fellows are also missing. . . . .

There was great excitement this morning, as the engagement between General Outram's Cavalry and Artillery and the enemy could be seen from the house we are in. My binocular glass is a beauty. I can see anything within 2 miles, which is all that one can desire; but I can almost distinguish a man's face at that distance. Brigadier-General Franks and his Gurkhas arrived the day before yesterday. . . .

I have now only a few spare moments to myself, and I take advantage of them to add a few lines as opportunity offers. I have just seen the *Gazette* of the 19th January, and find that I am down among the list of Majors. Several have got the same honour who do not in the least deserve it, and many, who deserve it, are not mentioned. It is very hard that Norman gets nothing, because he is only a subaltern. I believe he would get a C.B.-ship and Lieutenant-Colonelcy, if he were only a Captain. I believe Sir Colin Campbell will do his best to get him made something. He takes it so well too. . . . . The system is bad, and must be changed. . . . .

Soon after the date of the last letter, the final fighting mentioned by Sir Henry Norman took place. Lucknow was then entirely occupied by the British, and Civil Government restored. An incident occurred at this time, which, relating as it does to the well-known personal resemblance between Donald Stewart and the gallant Major Hodson, is worthy of note. The Begum Kothi was to be assaulted, a gun to be fired as a signal. Stewart

Ruins of the Dilkooshah Palace. [*To face p.* 126.

was in his tent with Hodson. On hearing the gun, they ran out to their horses. Hodson got away first. When Stewart arrived at the Begum Kothi the assault had been delivered. As he came up a soldier of a Highland regiment saw him and said: "I thought you were carried away mortally wounded, sir; here is your pistol." Stewart guessed at once that the man had mistaken him for Hodson,[1] who, as a fact, had received his death-wound in the assault.

HEAD QUARTERS, LUCKNOW,
3rd April 1858.

. . . . Norman and myself have established a very selfish but necessary rule now that we have got cool quarters: we have only one chair each, and when a visitor comes we never rise or offer our chairs, so they, finding there is nothing to sit upon, take themselves off as soon as they have finished their business. Formerly, when they came into our tents, they popped down on the bed or spare chair and made themselves comfortable for an hour's chat perhaps. This interrupted business to such an extent that we have determined never to break this rule. Several people came in to-day, and thought it very odd that we did not get up or offer them a chair. . . .

4th April.

I went this morning to Montgomery's,[2] and had half an hour's chat with him. I am going to dine with him to-morrow. I afterwards went to see an extraordinary fellow, who was wounded by our troops near Lucknow about two months ago; his eyes and a portion of his skull and brains have been cut out by a sabre-wound and his thigh was fractured by a bullet. The doctors, however, brought

[1] See foot-note, p. 404, vol. i., Lord Roberts' "Forty-One Years in India."

[2] Mr Robert Montgomery, Chief Commissioner of Oudh, afterwards Sir Robert Montgomery, K.C.B., G.C.S.I., Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab.

him round, and he is now under sentence of death, though I believe it is intended to commute his sentence to transportation. When he came out of Lucknow to fight, he was dressed up like a monkey with a tail, etc.,[1] and led on the rebels most pluckily till he was wounded, when all his followers bolted and left him. As soon as the wretch heard my voice, he said, "Yeh Stewart Sahib."[2] I did not, in fact could not, recognise him, but I had a long chat with him. He was a Sepoy in the 3rd company of the 9th, and was enlisted by me when at Lucknow in 1845; he said that he was compelled to fight against us, etc., and a lot of rubbish, but as he has been so awfully mangled, and is now unable to move, I cannot see any use in hanging him. He could give me no information about the corps, which never came near Lucknow. . . . .

We expect to move in a few days towards Cawnpore, and thence up the Trunk Road to Futehgurh, near which we shall find a column proceeding to Bareilly, under General Walpole. We are therefore in for another hot weather in hill tents. I suspect many of us will be knocked up at last; at present, thank God, I have the very best health, and heat does not disagree with me, if I am not obliged to expose myself actually in the sun. . . . .

HEAD QUARTERS CAMP, FURIDPORE (10 *miles from Bareilly*), *4th May* 1858.

. . . . We shall reach Bareilly to-morrow morning, but I hardly think there will be any fighting. We hear from all sides that there is not a single regular Sepoy in the place, only the rabble entertained by the rebel Nawáb. The Nana has gone off already, and has doubled back to Oudh by the Terai, and Khan Bahadur, they say, intends to bolt to-day. It will be a great bore if they do not make a stand, as we shall have to follow them up if they go off in a body. They are now as persevering as ever. We had no sooner marched away from Shahjehanpore, leaving a garrison of 540 European Infantry, 6 guns, and De

[1] Doubtless intended to represent the Monkey God—Hunuman.

[2] "This is Mr Stewart."

Kantzow's Horse, than several thousand men came and attacked their camp. They had to retire into the gaol, which they are to defend till we return after the capture of Bareilly. Many of De Kantzow's warriors bolted, and seventeen of them came into our camp, saying that the whole party would be cut up. They managed, however, to carry off safely De Kantzow's cart and a lot of his property. The natives say that our people were obliged to abandon their camp equipage before they retired to the gaol, but the officer commanding the force does not mention this, and writes in capital spirits. Money, my old Aligurh friend, is there as collector. I fancy it is the first time in his life that he has stood a siege.

9th May.

I have written nothing since the 4th, I find, but for the first two days we were out in the sun fighting, and since then I have had enough to keep me employed ever since. The first day we had a very pretty fight, took fourteen guns and killed a good number of the enemy. When we were all advancing with Tombs' troop of Horse Artillery the rebels opened on us with two guns at about 500 yards. The first shot wounded a horse, the second went over our heads, the third killed two men, and the fourth hit Norman's heel. I have never seen a more wonderful escape, an inch more in any direction would have smashed his foot; as it is, he is walking about. I saw on that day what has seldom been seen for a century. About 200 fanatics with nothing but swords attacked the 42nd Highlanders in line;[1] they broke through part of the right wing, and threw the men somewhat into confusion for a time, but the Highlanders quickly rallied, and bayoneted almost every man of their assailants. All these men have made up their minds to die, and were not in the least daunted at seeing their comrades shot down and bayoneted. I was behind the left wing of the 42nd, and kept a sharp look-out, as I saw three officers cut down in rear of the right wing. None of them were badly

[1] A foreshadowing of Ahmud Khel.

wounded, still I would rather not have a sword-cut across my nose if it could be avoided; however, the men in front of me behaved so steadily, that I felt confident no amount of these wretches could break their line; they were immediately bayoneted as they came up, though not before they had inflicted a sword-cut on some of our men. I wonder if in the despatch my name will be mentioned this time, because when General Mansfield was telling the Chief the officers he proposed to leave behind at Futehgurh, and mentioned mine among them, Sir Colin said: "I should have liked to have taken Stewart, as there might be some opportunity for mentioning him in despatches." People here with the army know well enough that I was omitted from the Lucknow list by mistake; those at a distance know it not, and do not know why it should have occurred.

10th May.

Yesterday we had a severe dust and rain storm; at the time it was disagreeable enough, but it has cooled the atmosphere, which for a day or two will be bearable. . . . . We have taken possession now of the whole country; there is not a town or fort of any importance in the hands of the rebels, yet we have no friends outside our own picquets. . . . .

HEAD QUARTERS CAMP, SHAHJEHANPORE,
22nd May 1858.

. . . . . I have been overwhelmed with work for some days, and have therefore been unable to continue my letter. I must try and contrive to send this off to-day, as we shall very likely be out fighting to-morrow. The re-inforcements we have been waiting for have arrived. The Moolvie, who is in command of the enemy's force, is only about 3 miles from our outpost with some 5000 Cavalry, 12 guns, and a lot of Infantry. Khan Bahadur of Bareilly and the Nana are at Mahomedee, only 16 miles off; but they are so smart in their movements that we have no hope of catching them until the people of the country begin to aid us, which they at present do not seem disposed to do. . . . I

am not an alarmist by disposition, but I confess that, as far as I can judge, our difficulties in this country are only commencing. There will not, after the capture of Calpee and one or two strong forts in Oudh, be any battles of importance to fight; but there will be a constant harassing guerilla warfare going on all over the country. As it is, we are now fighting in nine or ten different places at this moment, and the Trunk Road, which was tolerably safe when the enemy were collected in grand masses at Lucknow and Bareilly, is now infested with roving bands of marauders, by one of which poor Waterfield was murdered the other day within a few miles of Agra. The 4th Native Infantry, which had behaved so well till lately, has been found out conspiring to murder their officers. The discovery was only made about half an hour before the time intended for the outbreak. This shows that these men are not now to be trusted under any circumstances. We had hoped that certain regiments that had withstood all sorts of temptations for a whole year might be depended upon; but the conduct of the 4th Native Infantry has upset this theory altogether. It is inhuman to think of exterminating by the sword a whole race; but at present it almost seems hopeless to expect peace whilst a single Mahomedan and a great many of the Hindus remain alive. The Hindus of Rohilkund, who are said to be pining for our return to free them from their Mahomedan oppressors, have been in many cases convicted of harbouring known rebels of the other creed; so that one becomes completely perplexed. All our previous knowledge of the natives of this country has been of the very smallest use to us. For my own part, I am convinced now that we know nothing of their real characters. Our Civil Government and Institutions—the work of many able and benevolent men, who have for half a century devoted their energies to benefit the country—have been completely wasted and thrown away. The influence of the Civil servants does not now extend beyond our own picquets, except in those districts from which the rebels and mutineers have been entirely expelled by the troops. The police of themselves are unable to defend

their own posts; much less can they protect persons or property in the disturbed parts of the country.

Such is the state of affairs. We have been shutting our eyes to these facts for some time because we have been engaged in military operations of some importance; but marching about the country with small bodies of troops only brings these things forcibly before us. What we now require is a Governor-General like Lord Dalhousie, a man of character, originality, strong sense, and firmness. Our present Government has no policy, as far as I can see; this in itself is a curse in these days. It is, perhaps, disagreeable to admit it; but we must, if we intend to hold the country, have some influential portion of the people on our side. At present I do not see that a great part of the community is favourable to us. It was, therefore, the duty of our rulers to conciliate, when they could do so with honour and advantage; but the reverse has been the case.

Government has proudly kept aloof from making any advances whatever. The consequence is, that we have, I feel certain, lost opportunities of making powerful friends of men who were wavering. Our policy towards Oudh has been, I think, wrong, from beginning to end. . . .

HEAD QUARTERS CAMP, 13*th June* 1858.

. . . . We are on our way to Allahabad, where Army Head Quarters is to be established for the rains. I fancy we shall take the field again in October. I am nearly dead with all this knocking about, and shall be glad to be at rest for a month or two. I have now little or no time to write, and, were it not that Sir Colin has gone off to Allahabad, I should not have a moment to myself to finish this, for since Norman went away, I have not had the pen out of my hand for a second, except when I'm asleep, and very little do we get of that. Four hours every night is about our average, but frequently two and three hours is all we get.

. . . . We shall reach Cawnpore to-morrow, and I am thinking of staying there with Macpherson and going to Futehpore by dawk and thence by rail to

Allahabad. Fancy, it will be my *first* rail journey! I have only *seen* a railway once, and have *never* been in a carriage. There are not a great many Indians even who can say the same. It proves that I want a change to Europe, if it were only to civilise myself a little.

. . . . . India is quite changed since the outbreak; everything treble the price it formerly was. . . .

HEAD QUARTERS, ALLAHABAD, 19*th June* 1858.

. . . This is the 19th June, the day I arrived at Eden's camp last year on my way to Delhi. What scenes I have witnessed since then! I never wish to go through such a time again. The constant exposure is telling on the troops, and daily we hear of officers and men being killed by sunstroke. Copeland of the 10th Cavalry died of it the night before last, after an illness of seven hours. I have had, thank God, splendid health. I don't know how I should look after a trip home, and would give a good deal for only six months' leave to go home. I shall certainly try to get away as soon as furlough is opened; but there appears to be no prospect of peace. The rebels are now spread all over the country and are giving much trouble. There is only one really formidable body of them together, that now in Gwalior; but Sir H. Rose will shortly expel them, I trust. If we could only give the troops rest for two or three months we should be ready to take the field again in October; but if we go on as we are now doing, we shall have nothing left. . . .

20th June.

I have got a few minutes to myself to-day, as it is Sunday, and I cannot, I fancy, devote it to a better purpose than that of writing to you.

. . . . . I should like to be with you when travelling about the country. I am rather fond of it when there are no children to look after. I think if I do go home, I should like to make a pedestrian tour in the Highlands. I should like to visit my old haunts. I am sure I could find out the best hazel-nuts and wild cherries in the parish, also where trout do most congregate in streams. . . . .

The Gwalior news has just arrived. It is said the Ranee of Jhansi has been killed there. Perhaps it is as well, as she would certainly have been hanged had she fallen into our hands. The Moolvie has, likewise, been killed near Shahjehanpore, and there is now only the Nana to catch to make matters a little more peaceful. These successes will prevent the necessity for a general campaign next cold weather, I hope. . . . .

By the way, your account of the children's progress astonishes me. That is to say, if they know anything of the subjects you specify as part of their study. I am a great advocate for keeping them to a few branches at a time, instead of cramming them with everything at once. However, they are evidently, by your account, not backward. I hope the two boys will be clever enough to get into the Civil Service, or, at all events, that they will fancy some profession besides the military. It is very uphill work being a soldier, unless one has interest. I think I should have been far better off in almost any other profession than I am at present. However, boys will, I suppose, to the end of the chapter, be captivated by the red coat, etc. I shall certainly try and educate our boys for whatever profession they may select themselves, when they are of sufficient age to make up their own minds. . . . . I have commenced racquets in the evening, and feel all the better for it. The only bore is the distance. The court is about two and a half miles off in the Fort. Do you remember how you used to look out for my return from the racquet-court at Benares when we were first married? I wish these days would come round again. . . .

HEAD QUARTERS, ALLAHABAD, *1st July.*

. . . . . I hope in a few days to hear from you a long account of your visit to Scotland, and to hear what you think of the Scotch. I wish I could have taken you to the Highlands and introduced you to my old friends; they were a much nicer set of people than I have ever met elsewhere, but I suppose that many of them are no longer alive. However, I should like to take you to all the

places I used to frequent when a boy. I think I remember every inch of the country, I have it so clearly fixed in my memory. . . . .

5th July.

The Bombay mails come in most regularly, notwithstanding the numbers of rebels that are roaming about Central India, and particularly along the Indore Road. It is very strange that we do not hear what has become of the 12,000 rebels who fled from Gwalior. At first it was supposed they had gone to Jeypur, but I now hear they only passed through a portion of that state, but made no attempt to go to the capital, where my friend Eden would have been in a nice fix, particularly as there are always in Native States many enemies of the British in authority, and Jeypur is no exception to this rule. . . . .

I have been for the last few days rather seedy, but the doctor has, I think, set me to rights again. The doctor is a relation of my mother's—a Mackinnon from Skye. I believe he is a second cousin or so, but really in Scotland these relationships are carried to such an extent that one is soon in deep water. However, Mackinnon is a species I thought, till I saw him, quite extinct. He says if any lineal descendant of Prince Charlie's was still alive, he should not acknowledge Victoria as Queen of England. He is very fond of the bagpipes and such music, and I am told is the best dancer in Scotland—I mean of the Highland Fling. They said that at the Caledonian Ball in London last year the English present thought he was stark-mad from the way he flung his legs about. We have great fun at mess with him, as he gets quite annoyed with me for pretending I am not a Scotchman. . . . .

Lieutenant-Colonel Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

ALLAHABAD, *20th July* 1858.[1]

Sundays are generally devoted to private correspondence and my private affairs, which are now in the

[1] The date of Stewart's promotion to be brevet Lieutenant-Colonel, though he was unaware of the fact till some time afterwards.

most perfect order. My account book would astonish you, and my list of bills, "paid and unpaid," would, I am sure, be the envy of any well-conducted manager. . . . . You must not from all this think I am a bit happier than if I had not a sixpence, for without you my life is very miserable. I know that I do not show this outwardly, but you are never absent from my thoughts, and the difficulty of reconciling your duties to our children with your joining me is very perplexing. . . . .

ALLAHABAD, 31*st July* 1858.

I shall be very savage if the mail of the 26th does not bring the Lucknow Brevet; though I have a horrid suspicion that I am doomed to remain an old Major. Some years ago I should have thought myself a wonderfully fortunate man to be where I am; but now I require to be a Lieutenant-Colonel before I can promise myself perfect happiness. . . . .

I shall be glad when the time comes to go into camp again, as I am never in better health than when marching about. Sir Colin is a very restless being, and is sure to go knocking about the country in the cold weather. . . . .

ALLAHABAD, 22*nd August* 1858.

. . . . By the way, I saw in Bobs'[1] last letter to Norman that he was going to Bray, and I think he talked of driving with you to see a Regatta, if you would go. Bobs you will find just the same as ever. He says his father brings out the standard for every visitor, and tells them the whole story of its capture by Bobs; and he then shows the pouch through which he was wounded, etc., etc. I can picture to myself the old gentleman, when he is relating his son's adventures.

ALLAHABAD, *September* 1858.

. . . . I shall be glad to go into camp and enter upon what I fully expect will be the finishing stroke of the mutiny. They say there are some 60,000 men in arms still

[1] Roberts had now gone home on leave.

against us in Oudh, with some 300 guns of sorts. I believe this to be a very exaggerated report, unless they include all the guns in all the different forts, with which the country is positively studded. They are, however, but wretched affairs at the best of times, and can be easily taken with ordinary precautions by the application of our superior material, if directed by officers who are not regular idiots.

By the way, do you in Ireland see the wonderful comet that has been so correctly predicted by Astronomers? It was clearly seen last night, and will be visible for some days. People here fancy it has some effect on the season, which has been wonderfully cool. The weather now is delightful—not cold, still not hot—a nice medium. . . . .

ALLAHABAD, 14*th October* 1858.

I fear that this will be a very short epistle, because I do not like to retain it till to-morrow, and I have not hitherto had a moment to myself since my last. Norman has not yet returned from Calcutta, and Mayhew[1] has been laid up with gout, so that in fact the whole work of the office has fallen on me, and I have been quite unable to keep matters going. My work has got dreadfully into arrears. I have on my table nearly 200 letters to be answered, and I cannot get through more than 30 or 40 a day, with the current work to carry on at the same time; but I know you will make allowance for me, as I am pretty regular generally. I must now tell you that I am not going with the Chief, but am to be left in charge of the office at Allahabad. I am sorry for this, but it could not be helped; I am the junior in the department, and do what I am told. I shall not fret about it. As camp equipage is kept at Cawnpore for the portion of the Head Quarters establishment remaining at Allahabad, I fancy we shall have to move towards Lucknow some time during the cold weather, or after the Commander-in-Chief has cleared the southern portions of Oudh. He crosses the river opposite this with

[1] Colonel Mayhew, the Adjutant-General of the army, who had succeeded Neville Chamberlain in that office.

a small force. I fancy his intention is to surround the rebels and drive them, if possible, towards the Terai jungles, which are so deadly at this season of the year. I hope the thing will be done effectually this season, for it is very damaging to our rule to have such large bodies of rebels collected within our dominions, and collecting revenue which we are unable to take ourselves. Every one is sick of the whole affair; there will not be any great battles, but many skirmishes, and considerable loss of life is to be expected. I think that the country will be much disappointed if the mutineers are not thoroughly crushed within the next six months. The great fault is the excess of caution that is exhibited on our side. We should not go so heavily encumbered with siege guns, which are seldom, if ever, used. Of course when forts are to be attacked heavy artillery is requisite; but for field work a column is much hampered when accompanied by the smallest siege train. . . .

CHAPTER VIII

SIMLA AND CALCUTTA—1859-1867

As already related by Sir Henry Norman, Stewart, as Assistant Adjutant-General of the army, reached Head Quarters at Simla in April 1859. Mrs Stewart—after an absence of more than three years —returned from England. Staff work at Simla and Calcutta is ordinarily more or less of a routine character, and Stewart's career from 1859 to 1867 as Assistant Adjutant-General and Deputy Adjutant-General does not present any very marked features which demand lengthened description. It is interesting to me, the present writer, to recall my first visit of a few days to Simla, as far back as February 1861. Walking with my friend and host Charles Bernard[1] along the Mall, below the Jacko Mountain, we were met by a tall soldierly figure, with fair hair, bushy eyebrows, and rough-hewn features. My friend introduced me to Colonel Stewart, and I have never forgotten the incident. I was at once struck by the kindly yet humorous smile with which my new acquaintance looked down upon us. A few months ago, I reminded Sir Charles Bernard of the

[1] Afterwards Sir Charles Bernard, K.C.S.I., Chief Commissioner of Burmah, and subsequently for many years Revenue Secretary at the India Office; died at Chamounix, 19th September 1901.

meeting, and in a letter, the last, I grieve to say, which he was ever able to write, he replied:

"Donald Stewart was a fine soldier. . . . . In 1860-61 I knew him very well, and saw a great deal of him; we used to play racquets together and take walks that autumn and winter. He was in charge of the Head Quarters office at Simla. He was always fearless and outspoken in his opinions. At the India Office he was liked and respected by everybody."[1]

In the years 1864-1866-1868 it was my good fortune to see more of Colonel Stewart at Simla. The game of croquet had then become highly popular, and was eagerly played by old and young. The Viceroy, the Commander-in-Chief, Members of Council, and many others were thankful for this newly-discovered means of taking air and exercise at the end of a long day's work. No votary of the game was keener than Donald Stewart. I remember many games in which he played, the latest being in 1870, when I had the honour of being his partner in a match played in a London square, in which, I regret to say—after an exciting contest—we were defeated.

For a sketch of Stewart's life from 1859 to 1867 it will be sufficient to quote again from Sir Henry Norman's note, illustrating it with extracts from correspondence. No private letters of the years 1859 to 1861 appear to have survived, Mrs Stewart having been with her husband during the greater part of that time.

"We had hardly settled ourselves in Simla," writes Sir Henry, "before what was called the 'White Mutiny,'

[1] This refers to the time during which Stewart was in the Secretary of State's Council.

broke out among the European soldiers of the late Company's forces, who resented being transferred to the Queen's army, even though all their previous privileges were guaranteed to them. This very serious outbreak caused much anxiety and trouble, and ended in all these soldiers being given the option of taking their discharge and being sent home. About ten thousand took their discharge, and as this exodus greatly weakened the Artillery force, and operations were still in progress against mutineers in various parts of India, special measures had to be taken to obtain volunteers from Her Majesty's regiments to complete the troops and field batteries of the old Company's Artillery. Apart from this incident there was much to be done towards the re-organisation of the native army, the disposal of regiments which had been disarmed, and to remedy the disorganisation into which the native army had fallen throughout the mutiny.[1] Stewart and I and my other assistant, George Fraser, still happily alive, were hard-worked for some months, until in October the state of my health caused me to be sent to Calcutta, and eventually to England, whence I returned to Calcutta in the month of June 1861, when I found Stewart still Assistant Adjutant-General at Head Quarters in Calcutta. Incessant work and the trials of the mutiny had now begun to tell on him, and in the month of August 1861, he went home on sick-leave, accompanied by Mrs Stewart, who came down from Simla to go with him. He returned in less than a year and remained in Calcutta, and was promoted to be Deputy Adjutant-General, the Head Quarters of the army being then at Simla. Sir Hugh Rose had now become Commander-in-Chief in succession to Lord Clyde. I was also in Calcutta in 1862, but no longer was immediately associated in office with Stewart, as in January of that year Lord Canning had made me Military Secretary to the Government of India. Towards the end of 1862 Stewart joined Sir Hugh Rose in Upper India, and continued at Head Quarters on tour or at Simla,

[1] Stewart was gazetted to the newly-formed Bengal Staff Corps on the 18th February 1861.

until 1867. In 1865 Sir William Mansfield succeeded Sir Hugh Rose as Commander-in-Chief in India.

In the summers of 1864 and 1865 I was at Simla and saw much of Stewart and his family, but I was away all the year 1866, as in December 1865 I was attacked with enteric fever in Calcutta, and was sent home. Mrs Stewart came home with her boy, Donnie,[1] in the end of 1866, and returned with me to India in 1867, and I spent the summer of this year at Simla with the Stewarts in their house."

At one moment (during Sir Hugh Rose's tenure of office as Commander-in-Chief) Colonel Stewart appears to have seriously contemplated the abandonment of his profession, and the adoption of civil employment. An advantageous opportunity, viz. an offer of the Post-Master-Generalship of the Punjab, had presented itself, which, having regard to his position as a family man, Colonel Stewart felt that he ought not summarily to decline. The following letter shows how much the contemplated sacrifice of his profession cost him, and how little pressure from his official superiors was needed in order to lead him to remain constant to his career.

From Lieutenant-Colonel Stewart to Colonel Mayhew, Adjutant-General.

SIMLA, 18*th August* 1861.

I daresay it will surprise you somewhat to hear that I shall very likely apply soon for permission to resign my appointment in this department. I shall leave the office with much reluctance; but the offer that has been made to me is too good to refuse, particularly as I can see no prospect of advancement, when the amalgamation[2] has taken place. I have accepted the civil appoint-

[1] Now Captain Donald Stewart, C.M.G.

[2] *I.e.* the amalgamation of the European Indian army with the British army.

ment that has been offered me at the solicitations of my friends; but you may be sure that I have most unwillingly determined to throw up my professional prospects. Even now I regret that the tempting offer was made to me; for my family's sake only have I accepted it. . . . . The appointment is not altogether to my taste, but beggars must not be choosers. Bowring[1] will be able to tell you whether the Governor-General approves or not of my nomination. In the latter case I shall remain where I am; and, in the former, you will have plenty of time to look about for an officer to take my place, as it will not be necessary to relieve me before October. Should the Governor-General or the Commander-in-Chief be disinclined to part with my services I shall at once give up all idea of quitting the department. Indeed I should be glad to be told that I must remain where I am, as I have been unable to satisfy myself that I have done wisely in wishing to leave my present employment. However, I know that in this matter you will do what you consider best for my interests.

A resignation so half-heartedly tendered had, of course, little chance of acceptance, and the official reply speedily put an end to all Stewart's thoughts of becoming a Civilian. The letter was submitted to the Commander-in-Chief, who forthwith endorsed it as follows:

"Sir Hugh Rose has had such an excellent account of Lieutenant-Colonel Stewart's conduct in the field and capacity in the Adjutant-General's office that (as Colonel Stewart has had the right feeling to refer the question of his accepting civil office to him) he cannot say how sincerely he would regret it were he to leave the department; and certainly Colonel Stewart may rely on Sir Hugh Rose doing his utmost to compensate

[1] Mr Lewin Bowring (now C.S.I.), private secretary to the Viceroy.

him for the pecuniary loss which he will sustain from the high sense of duty which Sir H. Rose sincerely admires."

Then came an absence of several months' leave to England. Stewart returned to Calcutta in the hot weather of 1862, and soon after reported to his wife, who had remained at home, the good news of his appointment to be Deputy Adjutant-General in India.

Lieutenant-Colonel Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

CALCUTTA, *2nd June* 1862.

. . . . . I must now tell you about my prospects. In a word, I have this day been appointed permanent Deputy Adjutant-General, but there has been a great business about it. . . : .

You will understand from this that there is no hope of Simla for us this year, but it could not be helped, as the junior acting officer was in charge here, so that on my arrival he had to rejoin his own appointment. The Calcutta office is awfully easy work after the grind I have been accustomed to at Head Quarters, and, were it not on account of the climate, I should like to keep charge of this portion till I became Adjutant-General. . . . . When will that be? It does not trouble me, however, for I felt certain I should not get the Deputyship at once. I did not despair nor vex myself about the matter. . . . .

Sir Hugh Rose wrote in cordial terms of the pleasure which it had given him to recommend Donald Stewart for the post of Deputy Adjutant-General.

SIMLA, *2nd July* 1862.

MY DEAR STEWART,—In reply to your letter thanking me for recommending your promotion to the Deputy Adjutant-Generalship, I am glad to tell you that I have

great pleasure in being able to do so. Firstly, because you deserved it; and secondly, I was enabled to fulfil the promise I made to you, when you, for the sake of the army, gave up the appointment of Post-Master-General of the Punjab. I am sure that you will be of great assistance to me. In fairness you ought to have had your share of Simla; but, although, for the sake of business, you remain now at Calcutta, I hope that you will accompany me in my inspections in the cold weather, as an officer of your valuable departmental experience will be required.—Yours sincerely,

H. ROSE.

Colonel[1] *Stewart to Mrs Stewart* (*as are all the following extracts in this chapter, unless the contrary is stated*).

HEAD QUARTERS CAMP, 17*th November* 1864.

. . . . . I spent the whole morning shooting, and did not get into camp till past eleven o'clock, dead beat with the heat and disgust at missing so many antelopes. I had five shots, some of them very easy, but "the flesh ran away with the fur," and when all my bullets were expended the deer actually came and danced round me, knowing probably that they were quite safe.

. . . . I dined last night with the M——s; they don't much like their present station, and no wonder, for the two assistants here are "wallahs,"[2] and very queer ones. One is married, but he keeps neither horse nor conveyance of any sort. When he goes into the district on duty he walks by his wife's palkee! How the mighty Civil Service has fallen! I really think Government should interfere, and insist on their civil servants living like gentlemen S—— has come out to his camp with us, and is going to dine with His Excellency to-night; indeed, so am I, though I would

[1] Stewart became a brevet colonel on the 23rd June 1863.

[2] Competition wallahs or Indian civil servants appointed by competition. The well-known book, "The Competition Wallah," by G. Trevelyan, now Sir George Trevelyan, had been published a few years previously.

much rather have been left alone. I daresay I shall be badgered about my good shooting this morning. . . . .

CALCUTTA, 11*th February* 1865.

. . . . . We are very gay here just now, and next week there are to be all sorts of entertainments for or in honour of the Duke of Brabant,[1] who seems to have had quite enough of the "interior." We are to have a few parades in his honour, which are not likely to add lustre to our reputation as a military power, because the Corps in this neighbourhood are about the seediest I have seen anywhere . . .

CALCUTTA, 21*th February* 1865.

. . . . . Yesterday I had to go all the way to Ballygunge for my uniform, as we had to be presented to the Duke of Brabant in the evening. When I was brought up, he said: "Ah, I was introduced to you on parade the other evening," and he then asked if I was going home with the General, meaning Sir Hugh. He also enquired if I served in the Crimea, and seemed to think I was a muff for not having been there. The Chief then explained that all my services were performed in India, and that I was at Delhi, Lucknow, etc. After the reception we adjourned to the garden of Government House, where the bands got up a sort of serenade for H.R.H. . . . .

CALCUTTA, 22*nd February* 1865.

. . . . . The Chief still talks of sending me to Bhutan,[2] and I would have no objection if he would give me one of the Brigades in the front, but I have no notion of going there simply to relieve Mulcaster.[3] . . . . However, I shall be ready to go wherever I am ordered if the Chief really thinks I ought to go. If I am sent to Assam, I shall keep you supplied with plenty of good tea, and perhaps set up a plantation of my own. They are making a great fuss

[1] His present Majesty the King of the Belgians.

[2] The Bhutan expedition was then going on.

[3] Colonel Mulcaster, Bengal Cavalry, in command of a column of the expedition.

about the Bhuteahs just now, but I should say that they will not fight when they hear of the strength of our force now collected; they are not such fools to go and sacrifice half the population of the country simply because their Government have got a quarrel with ours. Most of our misfortunes have been caused by our neglecting the ordinary precautions of warfare, and by despising our enemies. Of course it is Eden's policy to run down the Bhuteahs, but we see that they have some of the qualities which all mountaineers possess, viz. pluck and activity, and these are qualities which make them, to a certain extent, formidable enemies in their own fastnesses. They are fortunately rudely armed, and are of no account in the open. . . . .

24th February.

. . . . . believe the Chief would have selected me for the command if I had not been so junior in the list of colonels. I only wish he had done so, as I feel sure that I could have given a good account of these Bhuteahs, though they are a more formidable enemy than we anticipated. . . . .

The following and other similar quotations are made to illustrate Stewart's great keenness in games and sports.

CALCUTTA. *24th February* 1865.

. . . . . Last night we had a fearful game of croquet; we commenced at five and did not finish till eight. So the Governor-General [1] asked us to dinner, and we had to go in our shooting coats, just as we were; there was nobody there but ourselves, and it was very pleasant. . . . . Sir John was in great glee because we had won the game of croquet. The sides were Sir John, Miss Emily Lawrence,[2] and I, against Monteath,[3] Mrs Monteath, and Miss Lawrence.[4] Their side

[1] The Governor-General, Sir John, afterwards Lord, Lawrence.

[2] Now Lady Cunningham.

[3] The late Mr A. M. Monteath, C.S.I., of the Civil Bengal Service, subsequently Post-Master-General of India. He was a remarkably good croquet player.

[4] The game, as played in India at this time, had, generally, three players on each side.

was the strongest, but by good luck we won the game. I must say I was a good deal excited about it, as the Monteaths are thought so much of. However, Dr Cunningham and I have beaten them several games. . . . .

CALCUTTA, 26*th February* 1865.

. . . . . It has been settled that I am not to go to Bhutan, because it has just dawned on His Excellency that I cannot well be spared from my duties in the office.

CALCUTTA, 28*th February* 1865.

. . . . . I wish this Bhutan business was settled one way or the other. Last night we heard that Tongsou Penlow has invaded the Durrung district, and commenced destroying the tea plantations on every side and looting every village he comes across. The country is adverse to active operations after the rains begin, but surely we can go wherever Bhuteahs will venture. It is first all confidence and the enemy is despised, then there is a slight reverse, and all is gloom. . . . .

In 1865 Donald Stewart experienced one of those disappointments of which official life affords, even to the successful, so abundant a crop. The post of Adjutant-General of India had fallen vacant, and Stewart, not unnaturally, hoped that he might succeed to it. He possessed, admittedly, every qualification; but Colonel Longden, an officer on the half-pay list of the Queen's army, who had gone through a long regimental career in India and served in that country for many years, and was present in the Sutlej, Punjab, and mutiny campaigns, was brought out from England to fill the post. Sir W. Mansfield,[1] the Commander-in-Chief, wrote to Stewart in a most kind manner on the subject, finishing his letter thus:—

[1] Afterwards Lord Sandhurst.

"We all of us have disappointments at times, and advancement seldom comes when and how we expect it, or according to our own particular designs. But the 'man's a man for a' that,' and he gets his reward sooner or later, though not exactly as he may have wished. I think I may predict this of you as certainly as of any man of my acquaintance. In the meantime there is nothing for it but to accept the inevitable with a smile."

The following letter from Colonel Haythorne, the outgoing Adjutant-General, gives a good idea of the feelings with which, at every stage of his career, Donald Stewart inspired those who had official intercourse with him.

Colonel Haythorne to Colonel Stewart.

SIMLA, *26th October* 1865.

I know you despise anything in the shape of a "chit,"[1] but I am, nevertheless, bound to relieve myself—as far as thanks can go—of the obligation I am under to you for the support you have given me during the two years and a half we have been together. I should, indeed, be ungrateful if I did not express to you that no one could have supported another in a more friendly and thorough spirit than you have done, and I thank you from my heart for it. I don't know what I should have done with all the multifarious questions of Indian affairs and Indian questions generally, and, more especially, with those with the Government, without your aid and thorough knowledge of the business, which was always forthcoming. I had, it is true, an inkling of the work from having been Adjutant of Bengal troops for nearly three years, but my knowledge was quite inadequate, and I should have got into great grief without your powerful assistance. It is a pleasant retrospect to think how well we have got on together, and how little difference of opinion has shown

[1] Certificate.

itself; and I shall always look back with great pleasure to the time we have been associated together. If we don't meet again at Delhi I must say farewell, with the very best wishes for your welfare and that of your family, for whom we shall both always entertain the warmest friendship. . . . .

Colonel Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

CAMP MUTTRA, 10*th November* 1865.

. . . We left Agra this morning in a *char-a-banc* about 6.30 and arrived at Muttra at 12, had breakfast, and started for Bindraban at 1, returned at 7, and went to dinner at the —— mess, and I am now trying to write to you. . . . . We had a large party at mess, that is to say, we sat down upwards of forty in number, which is astonishing for a small station like this. —— is, of course, a great swell among them all, though I must say I think he always talks to them as if they were on parade. Whilst introducing the officers to the Commander-in-Chief last night before sitting down to dinner, he called to more than one of them: "Come forward smartly, Mr So-and-so." This is all very well on parade, but is hardly the way to talk to one's equals in a mess-room.

CALCUTTA, 4*th December* 1865.

. . . . I am going to dine at Government House to-night, and am to play croquet there to-morrow. We had no end of games at Barrackpore, but I was always on the Governor-General's side, and we won invariably,—"of course," as the Bengalee Baboo says. . . . .

CALCUTTA, 14*th January* 1866.

As I am now writing the guns, announcing the steamer by which Longden arrives, are firing, so there is an end of my career (as John Paton[1] would call it) as Adjutant-General.[2] I shall have to take up the schedule to-

[1] Then Quarter-Master-General in India.

[2] Colonel Stewart had officiated as Adjutant-General in India on the termination of Colonel Haythorne's term of office.

morrow notwithstanding, but I hope my time will be more at my own disposal hereafter than it is at present.

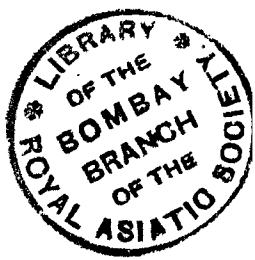
CALCUTTA, *22nd February* 1866.

. . . . John Strachey[1] has been appointed Chief Commissioner in Oudh, and Major Malleson succeeds him as Sanitary Commissioner. This latter appointment would have suited me, but I could not get myself to apply for it. However, I see that nobody gets anything in these days without asking. Everybody says that I am sure to get something good some day, but I am unable to see that any one troubles his head in the matter. For my own part, I see nothing better than a Brigade in the distance, and perhaps a Division when I am worn out and useless, if I live so long. This is not exactly the career I had hoped to make, but it cannot be helped. I must be thankful for the mercies I enjoy, and sink all ambition for the future. Thousands are worse off than ourselves, and we have a great deal to be thankful for, and many blessings. . . . .

CALCUTTA, *18th March* 1866.

This day week I hope to be on my way to Simla, and right glad I shall be when I have turned my back on Calcutta. The last few days are always disagreeable because there is much work to clear off and things to be done which are forgotten till the last moment. . . . .

[1] Now Sir John Strachey, G.C.S.I., C.I.E.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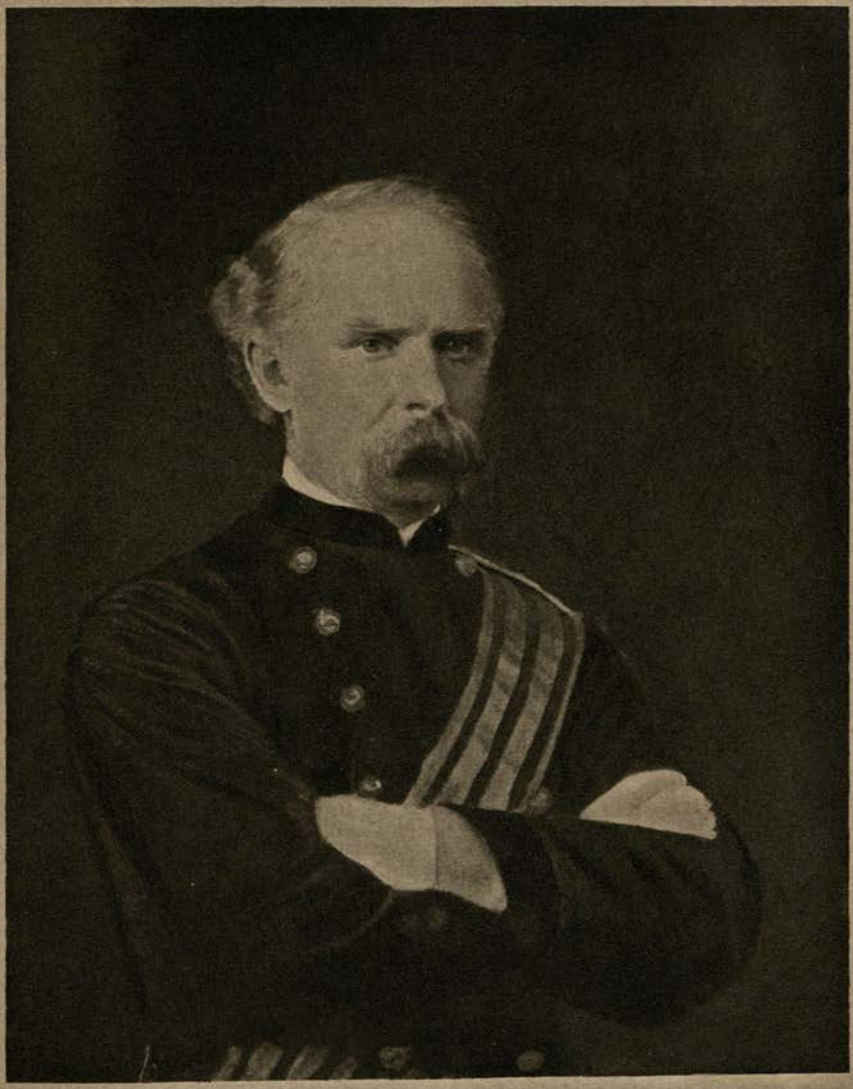
CHAPTER IX

THE ABYSSINIAN EXPEDITION

For several years prior to 1867 there had been strained relations between the English Government and the semi-barbarous monarch of Abyssinia. Some sixty Europeans had for various reasons found their way into that country, and had been detained there. Amongst them were two English officials, Mr Rassam and Captain Cameron, each of whom had been the bearers of letters from Queen Victoria to King Theodore. The rest were for the most part French and German missionaries and their families. They were now being confined as prisoners in a fort built on the Magdala plateau, 9080 feet above the sea—379 miles from Annesley Bay. The British Government had repeatedly demanded their liberation. The king had preserved a contemptuous silence. At last Colonel Merewether, Political Agent at Aden, was sent in July 1867 to Massowa with instructions to procure liberation of the prisoners, or, in default, to collect information with a view to an expedition for their recovery. Colonel Merewether reported that his mission, so far as concerned the liberation of the prisoners, had been a complete failure. He advised the immediate preparation of a punitive



D. M. Steuart

expedition, as an idea was gaining ground in surrounding countries that Great Britain was too weak to resent an insult to her flag. It was, thereupon, determined that a force should be despatched from India, under the Bombay Commander-in-Chief, Sir Robert Napier.[1] Colonel Stewart was appointed to the command of the Bengal Brigade, with Colonel F. Roberts as his Assistant Quarter-Master-General. The appointment was regarded with satisfaction, if we may accept the testimony of the *Friend of India*, a journal of well-deserved influence at this time in Indian circles.

"None but very ignorant or prejudiced criticism," said a writer in that newspaper, "would call in question the sound discretion which has placed Brigadier-General Stewart at the head of the Bengal portion of the Abyssinian expedition. Colonel Stewart was for many years the smartest regimental Adjutant in the Bengal army at a time when that force had reached its highest discipline. No officer who ever met the old 9th Regiment, Bengal Infantry, will question this fact. And Donald Stewart was also more than the simple Adjutant, carrying out the orders of his superior. His intelligence and thorough mastery of a soldier's duties and character made him the virtual Commandant as well as the Adjutant of the 9th Regiment, and this, too, as a subaltern. When the outburst of 1857 had well-nigh swept away every vestige of our power to the north-west, Captain Stewart galloped from Agra to Delhi, through a country in open insurrection, to share in the dangers and glories of that struggle, which was to determine our prestige, if not our fate, in India. Recognized as his talents had been for several years by Army Head Quarters, Captain Stewart was at once placed in the Adjutant-General's Department, in which he has continued to serve down to the present time, including

[1] Afterwards Lord Napier of Magdala.

the siege of Delhi, capture of Lucknow, and subsequent campaign. His abilities were fully recognized by Sir Hugh Rose, and, had the wish of the Commander-in-Chief been complied with, Colonel Stewart would have been nominated Adjutant-General of the army. That Sir William Mansfield entertains views no less flattering is sufficiently established by his selection for the command of the Bengal Brigade. The same stirring qualities, which made the reputation of the regimental Adjutant, have raised Donald Stewart to the honourable position he now occupies. Without interest, and of the highest independence, his career is one which every officer should lay to heart, as demonstrating how much unswerving devotion to duty, evinced in the field and cantonment, may accomplish."

In regard to the organization of the Bengal Brigade, Sir Henry Norman writes as follows :—

"Towards the autumn of 1867 the expedition to Abyssinia was decided on, and practically the arrangements for it were made by Sir Robert Napier, the Commander-in-Chief in Bombay, and most of the troops were taken from that Presidency. It was decided, however, to employ also a force from Bengal, to consist of a mountain battery of Royal Artillery, two regiments of Native Cavalry, and two of Native Infantry, and Stewart was placed in command with Roberts as his Assistant Quarter-Master-General. This force was to embark from Calcutta; and having witnessed all the preparations of the transports, and the embarkation of the force, I am bound to say that I do not think a more perfectly equipped body of troops ever went on service beyond sea. The principle decided on and carried out in every particular was, that each ship should carry as many troops as it could, consistently with the vessel also taking a complete equipment for the troops, to include provisions, ammunition, medical stores, transport, and all that can be needed by troops on active service for a considerable period. In this way each vessel is complete in itself. If it does not

arrive no other troops are crippled, and wherever it arrives the detachment on board is ready for active service. This seems to be the best way of sending troops across the sea on service, and much better than running the risk of losing, perhaps, nearly all the ammunition, or some other necessary article in one vessel. The system here adopted, assumes, of course, that reserve stores will follow in other vessels if there is any prospect of lengthened service."

Stewart and Roberts proceeded from Simla to Calcutta to carry out the necessary preparations for the campaign. Their operations were disturbed in November by a cyclone which made havoc with the cargo boats. There was, happily, no tidal wave; so that the vessels fared better than on some former occasions.

On 9th January 1868, Brigadier-General Stewart and his staff left Calcutta, accompanied by Mrs Stewart and Mrs Roberts, who travelled with them as far as Aden, from which point the two ladies proceeded to England. On arriving at Zoolla, General Stewart learnt that Sir Robert Napier was at Senafe, the first station in the hills, which had been selected as an advanced depôt for supplies. He also heard that the Bengal Brigade was to be broken up, that the troops were to go to the front, while he, General Stewart, was to take command at Senafe, and Colonel Roberts to remain as senior staff officer at the port of disembarkation. Some disappointment was naturally felt by Stewart and Roberts at a programme which excluded them from all share in the excitement of the campaign. The excitement would in any case have been a short one, for, on 17th April 1868, the news arrived that Sir Robert Napier had taken Magdala and released the

prisoners, and that King Theodore had committed suicide.

Of General Stewart's personal experiences in Abyssinia, the following extracts from his letters to Mrs Stewart give a characteristic account.

From Brigadier-General Stewart to Mrs Stewart (as are all letters in this chapter)

CAMP ZOOLLA, ABYSSINIA, *17th February* 1868.

. . . . . I hope that we shall soon be moving to the front, as all the Bengal regiments are going on as soon as we can feed them. The troops have not yet been brigaded, but you must simply address me as Commanding Brigade, Expeditionary Force, Abyssinia. . . . . The weather has been capital hitherto, but from one or two glimpses we have had of the sun, I fancy it can be tolerably warm in the summer. The mountains look very nice, and I shall not be sorry to be on their summits, as my garments are hardly suited for campaigning when the thermometer is something like 100° in the shade. The 10th Bengal Cavalry are coming on here, much to the delight of all concerned—and our ships are tumbling in slowly. The *Underley* was 43 days on the voyage, though her provisions were calculated for only 40. Sailing seems quite a chance. The coolie ships that expected to be from 40 to 60 days, came in 20, and the Cavalry ships that expected to do it in 20 or 25 were over 40 in each case. Some of those being tugged have not yet been heard of, and I am a little uneasy about them, as the animals on board make it a ticklish thing, on account of the enormous quantity of water they consume. Old Jones of the *Golconda*[1] comes down occasionally in his big boots and takes a look at us. The ship people are not only very civil, but very useful, as they give us water, which is a valuable commodity here. Indeed our daily allowance

[1] The P. and O. Steamer *Golconda*, in which Stewart had travelled from Calcutta.

from the tanks is not so great as on board ship, and I never have anything but a sponge bath now. . . . .

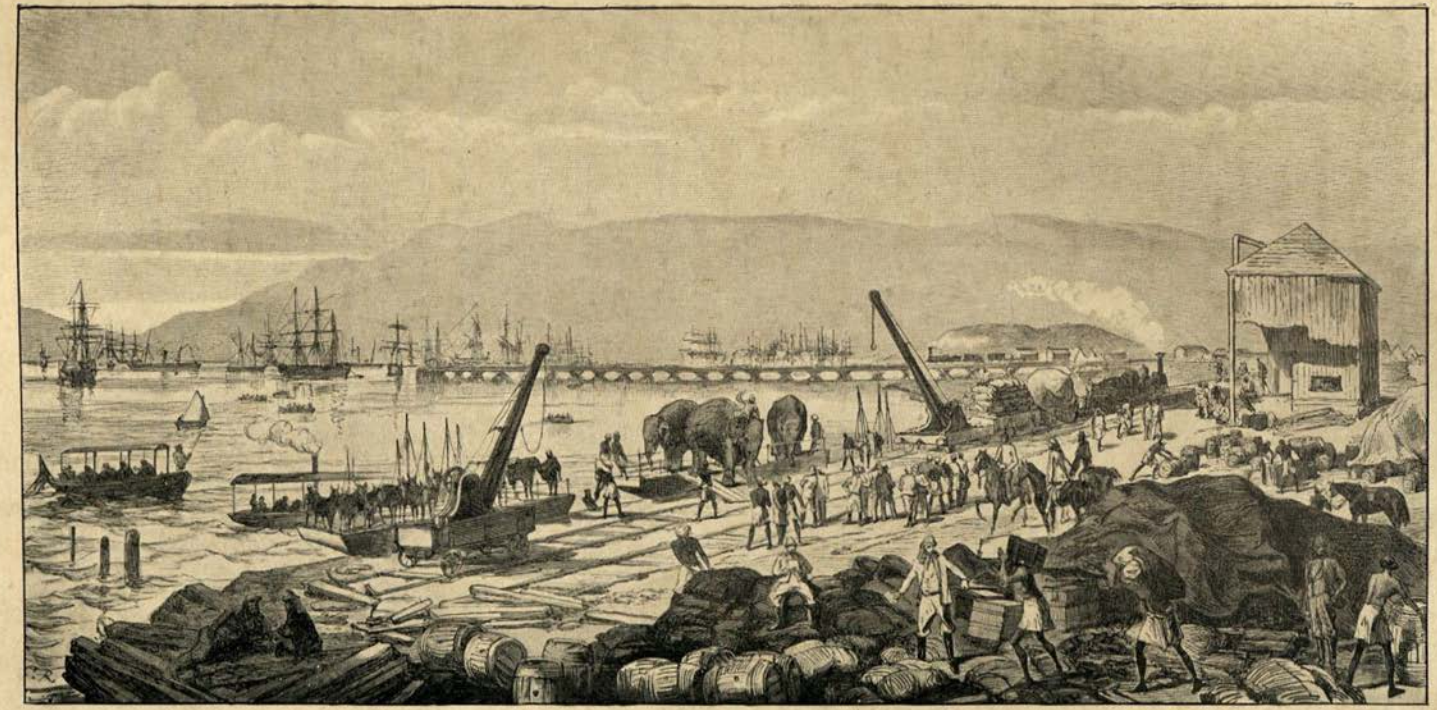
We don't get much news from the front. Theodore writes civil messages to Mr Rassam, and says he keeps him in confinement simply because he wishes to see more of our countrymen, and that by these means we are sure to come to Abyssinia. He has put all the prisoners in Magdala, but whether he proposes to fight there is a mystery. His troops are, I understand, a miserable lot, and I fear we have come to the wrong shop for glory. . . . . I thought that in going into the field I should get rid of "duftur,"[1] but I have really more of it than ever, and I am expected to control every department; this duty is really one that I ought not to be required to perform. The Brigadier, whom I succeeded, had nothing to do but see that the troops and cattle got water. My only difficulty is Staff. I suppose that this sort of experience will do one good professionally, as one sees where the shoe pinches when behind the scenes. A lot of French officers arrived here yesterday and are going to dine with us to-night. They will be astonished to see our iron *ménage*. Sir C. Staveley left us some china, which is most useful. . . . . This is the funniest place I have ever been in. One minute it is as hot as fire, and five minutes after the thermometer falls 15° or 20°. Luckily, we all keep our health. . . . . The First Brigade is to-day at "Antalo," only 120 miles from Magdala; it is quite possible that the campaign may come to an end in the course of a few months, but we shall soon know whether Sir R. Napier will risk an advance with a small body or not. If he does not reach Magdala before the rains set in we are planted here for a year at least.

ZOOLLA, *1st March* 1868.

You see we are still in this abominable place, though as far as coolness goes it has vastly improved. The sand is now covered with green grass, and we sleep every night under blankets. I have had a nasty attack of fever, and am very weak. . . . .

[1] Office-work.

Something interrupted me here, and I have not been able to put pen to paper until to-day, the 5th March. Unfortunately, too, the weather has changed, and it is frightfully hot during the day. You can therefore imagine what a person with fever suffers under such circumstances, when even a drop of cold water is not procurable. People have been all very kind, and the Commodore wanted me to go on board the flag-ship for a change, but I was obliged to stay in camp and carry on my work. It was very hard to do when one's head was in a whirligig with fever and quinine. . . . . It is very disgusting that the whole brigade should be moved on to the front, and that I and staff should be left here to keep the army supplied and act as whip to all departments. One Bombay regiment has already been left behind because the men complained about their food, and in another corps a Sepoy was flogged yesterday because he did not like the work of the railway. Chamberlain (Charles) has gone off with flying colours to the front. His men have done splendidly and they deserve credit. But so does he for keeping them in such excellent trim. Gough also moves off to-morrow. Some of the 10th B.C. ships have arrived from Aden, but they are so afraid of the *Challenger* that they won't let her come in, although her last case of cholera took place at the Sandheads on the 9th January. . . . . If the Bombay troops had been equipped like those from Bengal we should have been in Magdala at this moment. Every one here admits that, and that the only troops that looked like war were the Bengal Brigade. It is therefore rather hard that my men should be taken away, and that I am left planted on the shore, because I am supposed to know my business. Properly speaking, I have no concern with the departments here, as their Chiefs are on the spot, but I have to take all sorts of responsibilities on my shoulders, so that the work may go on. If I saw any prospect of a move I should not mind this, but, for all I can see, I may remain at Zoolla till the end of the campaign. This sort of disappointment must be borne—though I cannot honestly say that I bear



Zoolla. (*From a Woodcut, after a Drawing by Captain Simpson.*) [*To face p.* 158.

it with resignation, because I do not consider it quite fair. If the Chief thinks me fit, he should keep me with my men, and leave his Bombay general officers to look after Bombay troops. . . . .

ZOOLLA, 10*th March* 1868.

. . . . . Since my last letter our fate has been sealed, and we remain where we are. It is what I never expected myself, but you may remember many people in India predicted that such would be the case. So long as the men of my brigade were being sent to the front I always considered that I should follow. But to have all taken from under my command, and myself and staff left behind, is a measure I never for a moment contemplated; besides, even in the matter of seniority, I am the second Brigadier-General in the force. I know that Sir Robert Napier will say that this is an important command, and that the efficiency of the army depends upon the arrangements for feeding those in front. This is so far true, but then any active field-officer could see that orders were carefully carried out in this respect. . . . . I went out shooting yesterday with Cunliffe;[1] we had an awful trudge in the sun, but I fancy the exercise does one good. We got three hares, one brace of guinea-fowls, and two brace of spur fowls; the birds are great beauties, and such eating! The hares are wretched little things, but do capitally for the blaze-pan, which is always kept going. We saw some large bustards, but could not get a shot, they were so wary. . . . . We are awfully hard up for books, and I am now reduced to the *Leisure Hour*, through which I am going steadily. Some parts of it are very heavy, but we cannot be particular in such days as these. . . . .

ZOOLLA, 18*th* March 1868.

. . . . . When out shooting a few days ago we were all surprised to hear one of the ships of war in harbour saluting a general officer. I at once guessed it was General Russell come to relieve me, and such turns out to be the case. He

[1] Cunliffe Martin, a cousin—now Colonel Martin, C.B.

has not taken over command yet, but I shall soon b relieved, as we expect orders every hour by telegraph Of course I thought we would be sent straight off t the front as all the posts on the road have been alre provided with Commanders. But such luck is not in s for me. We are to be squatted at Senafe, where I remain till the end of the campaign. It is too disgu to think of such an end to all our hopes and aspirat and Sir R. Napier has most effectually squashed the Ben Officers, though he has appropriated all my men. . . The state of affairs here is becoming a little more excitin as two of the advance brigades are now within 50 miles o so of Theodore's camp. . . . . He is entrenched in hi camp between our troops and Magdala. He was making a road from his camp to Magdala, and was a little more civil to the prisoners. He told Mr Flad, who is in his camp, that he is very glad to hear an English army has arrived, and that he will willingly make over the prisoners to an ambassador of rank!! It is just on the cards that he will meet Sir R. Napier and hand over the prisoners, but the misfortune is that he will be just as likely to cut their throats. The people in these parts think he will fight, and I daresay they are right, for he has hitherto shown himself to be regardless of personal danger. The heat is something awful now, and I cannot imagine that the place can continue healthy much longer. Senafe is cool, being nearly 7000 feet above the sea. Of course it has its drawbacks. We shall have nothing to drink except rum, and no means of adding to our rations, as we have here. We get splendid fish, crabs, and prawns, and the bazaar is full of shops, where even ice is to be had at a dollar a peg. Nobody ever looks at any coin smaller than a dollar, and rupees are not taken at all by the natives of the country. . . . .

SENAFE, 31*st March* 1868.

. . . . . Senafe is certainly a relief after Zoolla, for the day before I left it was 107½° in my tent, and in some the thermometer rose to 117°; it is now only 75°, though it is

about the hottest part of the day. Senafe is 8100 feet above the sea level, and is in a sort of punch bowl. The place is bleak to a degree, not a tree, and the wind and dust are beastly, something like Simla in November. . . . . There seems to be no medium in this miserable country, it is either too hot or too cold. . . . Every one builds in front of his tent a sort of arbour of green boughs; in this they work and take their meals. The effect on the hillside is very picturesque and pretty.

SENAFE, 6*th April* 1868.

I intend going after a lion to-morrow which has been killing numbers of natives in a pass about 12 miles off. He has killed some fifteen people altogether, and we cannot get the Shohos to work in his neighbourhood, so we propose to have a battue after him to-morrow. . . . . Since my last letter I paid a visit to Goongoona, the first stage to the south from this. I cannot say that I am fascinated with the country or its people. Indeed, the only thing to be said in its favour is that the climate is temperate and very enjoyable out of doors. The people are very much like Bengalese in appearance, and are miserably poor. The men are lazy brutes, and the women seem to do the work of beasts of burden. I have seen little girls of twelve years of age or less carrying loads of grain weighing 75 pounds from this to Addigerat, a distance of 41 miles, which they generally do in three days. They are all Christians of sorts, but their precise creed or belief I have been unable to discover; they offer all sorts of parchment manuscripts for sale, which are stated to contain writings of a religious character, but I hardly care to invest dollars in speculations of this sort, particularly as they seem to be written in "Geez" or "Ethiopic," neither of which languages are known to me. . . . .

They are calling for more Cavalry from this, so I conjecture that things are not going so swimmingly as was expected. . . . . We are still without news from the Chief's camp, but the troops are making very slow

progress, and find the road much more difficult than they expected. It must be very tantalising to the prisoners, who know that our troops are close at hand, and that Theodore has made no sign as to his intentions. There is a constant call for money and Cavalry, but we have come to the end of our resources as regards the latter, and we shall soon not have the means of pushing forward the former, for our mules are nearly exhausted, and camels, carts, and country bullocks cannot work on the paths to the south of Addigerat. Matters are really approaching a very nasty crisis, and we shall be in a terrible fix if the country carriage fail us. The troops in front of this place are entirely dependent on it for food. My lion-hunting plans were all knocked on the head by a telegram from the Chief, which would not admit of my quitting camp. I hope that the other people will be successful, as I should like the Bengalese to be the first to bag a lion. . . . .

SENAFE, 13*th April* 1868.

. . . . . I have been writing a screed to my father, who has sent me no end of papers since my arrival, and I can assure you that they are very gratefully received, for we have no books, and if it were not for the newspapers I am sure I don't know how I should get through my nights. I have generally something to do in the daytime, especially at present, as the native transport has broken down, and it is just possible that Sir R. Napier may come to sad grief if we do not succeed in making the Chiefs resume work. It is entirely a matter of diplomacy, but if they persist in refusing to carry provisions to the front, the army will starve. We are all right so far at Senafe, as we have the Indian Transport Corps working between that place and Zoolla, but beyond Senafe we are entirely dependent on the natives of the country. They carry fast enough so long as they are allowed to steal as much of their loads as they like, but when checked on this point they simply decline to carry, and won't stand fines.

We must wink at a good deal of thieving, but we cannot permit the carriers to empty their bags altogether. When I was at Zoolla all these matters used to come upon me, but General Malcolm has followed me to Senafe, and never troubles Zoolla. This is hardly fair, as the Zoolla Commander has the reins in his hands, and I can only work through him or with his concurrence. These little difficulties are exciting to a certain extent, because they tell so strongly in front, and any continued stoppage of supplies would imperil the success of the expedition, unless Sir R. Napier has actually got the prisoners in his hands. On the 1st April he was within 30 miles of Magdala, and what he has been doing since that date no one knows. I expect to hear from Kennedy or C. Martin, who must both have reached Head Quarters in time for the meeting with Theodore. They are both lucky fellows, and I am glad they have escaped the fate that has befallen Bobs, Fellowes, and myself. . . . . I am so far fortunate in being in a fine climate. Yesterday being Easter Sunday, I and some officers visited some of the churches in the neighbourhood, expecting to witness the service. All were empty, but my companions did, according to their own view, a good stroke of business. We had no interpreter with us, but we picked up a travelling gentleman in the fields, who seemed disposed to accompany us in the expectation of making a dollar. The first church we entered was a very seedy edifice, and our native friend not only introduced us into the Holy of Holies, but quietly took up the *Parish Bible* and sold it to an officer for five dollars! The next church we visited was similarly plundered of its sacred books, but on this occasion the seller was the parson. After our bartering was over we lunched in the entrance hall of the church, and had no end of talk with the inhabitants, who were civil enough, but as the only word common to both parties was dollar (real), you may imagine that our discourse was limited. The boys were curious about our clothes, and expressed a strong desire to deprive us of our

flannel shirts. They know the word "kamese,"[1] and importuned us to give up the said garments. These Christians are a curious mixture; they always showed great reverence on entering the churches, kissing the door lintels and the steps of the inner room, but I have been unable to reconcile this with the sale of the church books and manuscripts. The books were, I believe, all copies of the Old and New Testament written on parchment in the Amharic character, and occasionally illuminated. Some contained paintings of the Virgin Mary somewhat in the Byzantine style of painting. It was amusing to see the eagerness with which my friends purchased these books. One thought it probable that they were Hebrew manuscripts taken from Jerusalem at the sacking of the Temple (!!), and all considered they had possessed themselves of very valuable treasures. As all were written in modern Amharic, which I can myself decipher, I knew that they were of no antiquity, and that copies of the same books may be purchased any day in London. Of course Bibles and New Testaments written on vellum or parchment by natives of the country possess a certain amount of consideration in some people's eyes, and will doubtless be held to be wonderful books by their friends at home, but I cannot say that I had any desire to become the owner of any such myself. Old manuscripts which referred to the history of the country or the spread of Christianity among the people would, of course, be invaluable; but none such are procurable in these parts of Abyssinia, as they would be liable to capture by Mahomedans, who reside on the borders.

Since I last wrote I have had several visitors from Zoolla, and Bobs among the number. He came up one afternoon and returned the following morning. He was looking very well, but enjoyed immensely the mouthful of cold air he got here. He slept on the floor of my tent,

[1] The word used by native servants in India for shirt, derived from Portuguese.

and though he had half a dozen blankets he said he felt the cold greatly. Our chief difficulty is to supply people with food and drink, and the means of eating what we can provide. We have very few knives, forks, and plates, and my *shaving-pot* is often brought into use as a wine-glass. Murray[1] does the cooking, assisted by the grey horses' syce. I often thought the chupatties had a peculiar flavour, and I discovered some days ago that they were manufactured by the syce. Whether they are baked in the stable or the cook-room I know not, and did not enquire. Murray is always assisted in some ways by an Abyssinian damsel of sixteen or seventeen, who seems quite at home on the premises. Murray talks to her in Hindustani, and she replies in the Tigre tongue. However, she brings water, wood, milk, etc., and is a very useful party. Her dress would rather astonish you, though; she wears nothing but a leather apron, which does not come down more than half-way to her knees, and across her shoulders a sheep-skin adorned with cowrie shells. Being very fat, the *tout ensemble* is striking, if not elegant. . . . . This place is surrounded by huge mountains of rock, which contain places of refuge for the country people in times of trouble. In one of these rocks there is a native church, which Fellowes and I have vainly tried to reach. We were for several hours scaling the rocks the other night, but failed, as usual. I had to take off my boots and walk in my stockings, and then I got thorns in my feet, which I have not yet been able to extract. We intend making another attempt soon, as we think we have discovered a path which leads to the church. Although the rock is not more than 200 yards from camp, nobody has yet succeeded in reaching the church, although we have heard that some soldiers carried off books and manuscripts on the first arrival of our troops at Senafe. . . . .

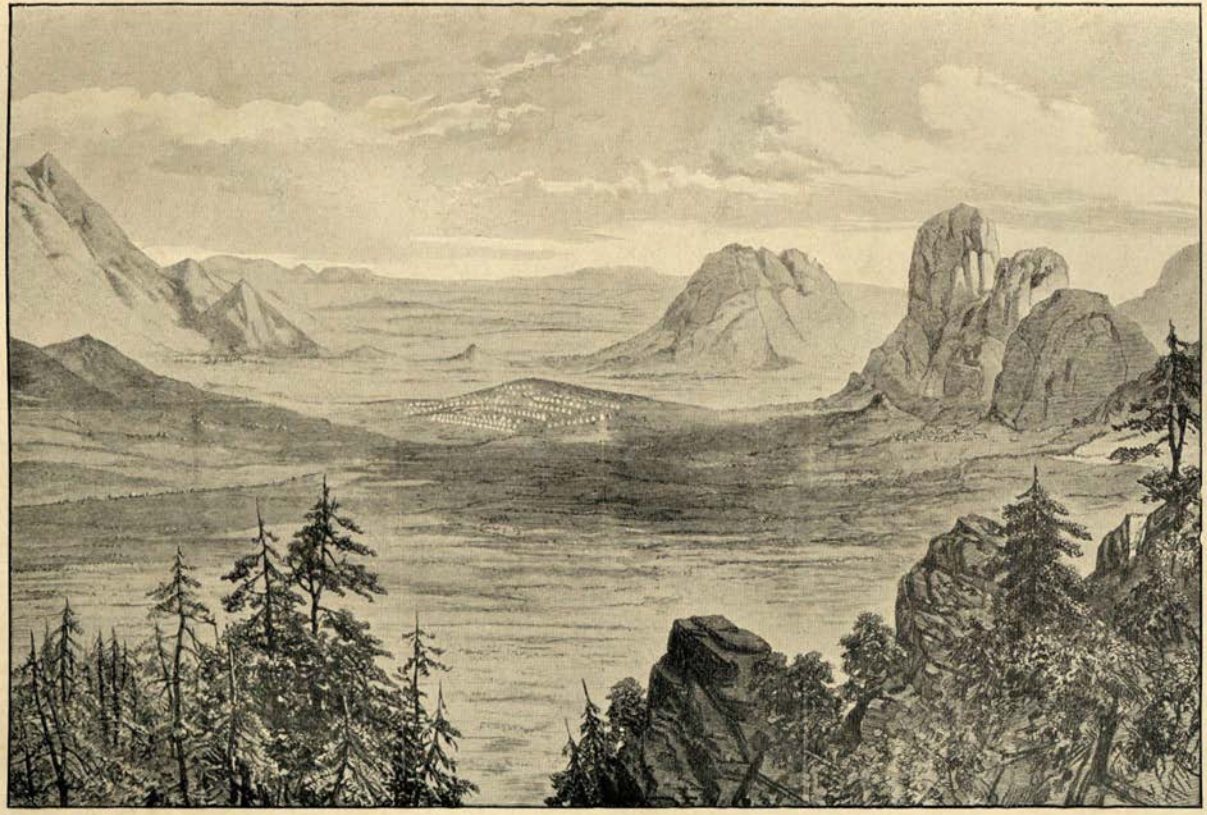
SENAFE, 19*th April* 1868.

I think I stated in my letter of the 14th that you would in all probability hear of the capture of Magdala before my

[1] General Stewart's European soldier-servant.

letter arrived, and I fancy that my prophecy was fulfilled, for just after the mail started we got a telegram from the front, stating that our troops fought Theodore on Good Friday, and thrashed him well, and that on the two following days he not only gave up all the prisoners, but the whole of the Europeans employed in his service. After this Theodore withdrew to his fort, and declined to give himself up. On the 13th Magdala was stormed, and carried with trifling loss, Theodore being killed fighting to the last. Several chiefs and many thousands of his followers, after the first fight, threw down their arms and abandoned Theodore, but he behaved not only like a Christian, but a man of honour, and died defending his fort. It appears he was shot through the head, and was recognized by the Europeans and prisoners. His sons have been captured and his wives have been let loose. What Sir R. Napier will do with the former I know not, but the chances are they will come to grief when we leave the country, as their father was detested by the people.

Whatever Theodore may have been formerly, he has acted like a man in his last moments, and one cannot help admiring his generosity in giving up all the prisoners after his first defeat, and then fighting out to the end in his stronghold. I am very sorry that he was killed, but it was a proper ending to his extraordinary life. I fancy we shall be out of this by the end of June, but you had better continue writing to Zoolla till I give you notice. I have written to the Chief and asked for the Peshawur Brigade, as I can't go home till I get an appointment or until the new furlough rules come into force. It is a great nuisance having to return to India, but unless something is done to put Generals on a better footing as to English allowances I must remain in India to enable you to live in England. . . . . We have not yet had any letters from Magdala, but from the telegrams that have passed through for the English newspapers we hear that Theodore shot himself when he found that his fort could not hold out. How this comes to be known it is difficult to say, but they



Senafe. (*From a Woodcut, after a Drawing by Captain Simpson.*) [*To face p.* 166.

state that he was shot through the head by a *pistol* bullet, and that we did not fire pistols.

21st April.

. . . . . I have had no letters from the front yet, but I have seen some of the newspaper telegrams, which will astonish you. One says that the prisoners were all fat and jolly, but they abuse each other in the vilest way! This was to be expected, as people mewed up in one place for years are sure to end in bickering. The fighting, as far as the enemy is concerned, was very shady. They were shot like rabbits by our troops, and although some came on to our bayonets the majority never made a stand.

SENAFE, *1st May* 1868.

. . . . . We have no certain information yet as to what is to become of us, but we cannot be kept very much longer in the dark, as the Chief is to be here with the whole of the expeditionary force on the 20th or 21st of this month. I have, however, been ordered to go on with the hutting of the brigade as if a force was to be kept here during the summer. There is hardly a soul in the force who will not be glad to leave the country, and there is now just as much eagerness to quit Abyssinia as there was to come here six months ago. Though the climate here is good there is nothing to do except shoot, and even that becomes tiresome in time. . . . . Fellowes, who went south as far as Antalo, has returned, so I have not to eat my modicum of stew in solitary state any longer. Fellowes was much pleased with his trip on the whole, though he had to guard his baggage the whole way lest it should be looted by our sable friends. I had an interesting letter from Cunliffe a few days ago, giving an account of the capture of Magdala, at which he was present with Gough's[1] Regiment. They surrounded the fort for the purpose of cutting off Theodore's retreat, but the miserable wretches, when they saw the Cavalry, threw down their arms, and had no desire to fight, so the gallant 12th B.C. had no opportunity of distinguishing themselves. The unfortunate 10th B.C. were kept back, because their carriage was wanted to take food to the Head

[1] Now General Sir Hugh Gough, V.C., G.C.B.

Quarters. They are naturally very sore about this, but they really lost nothing, except the barren honour of having been "present at capture of Magdala." Theodore shot himself, beyond doubt, when he found that it was all up with him. Cunliffe saw the body, and says he was a most ordinary looking fellow, such as you would pass on the road without a second look. His queen is very pretty, but what has become of her and her children I don't know. Magdala was burnt by Sir R. Napier before he left, as a warning, I suppose, to all future Abyssinian princes.

. . . . . Sir R. Napier has issued a general order to the "Soldiers of the Abyssinian Army," and states that he will see them re-embark himself. How this decision will affect my plans I cannot say, but I intend to ask permission to return to Bombay as soon as possible, in order that I may not lose another chance of a brigade command. My belief is that we shall all be out of this country before the end of June, but we are, nevertheless, working away at barracks here as if we intended to remain for years.

3rd May.

I have just received a telegram from Head Quarters ordering off three regiments to India on the 15th May. This is a move in the right direction, and I shall not be sorry when I get the order to return too. . . . .

I find we have been wasting a great deal of unnecessary sympathy on these Abyssinian prisoners. They have been living on the fat of the land though chained by the heels, and had every comfort. . . . . Theodore's son is to go to Bombay to be educated. This was his father's wish, strange to say. . . . .

SENAFE, *6th May* 1868.

After posting my letter yesterday I got a letter from Head Quarters, showing what arrangements are to be made about the re-embarkation, and I find we are all to be out of the country by the 4th June. . . . . Everybody seems delighted at the idea of getting out of the country, and I am not sorry myself, though I shall never be able to save so

much money again. I hope I shall get one month's full pay before I leave. . . . .

SENAFE, *17th May* 1868.

I fancy this will be the last letter you will get from Senafe, as by this day week the Chief will be here, and I shall intermediately have been sent to Zoolla. . . . . We are very busy here now pushing the troops on to Zoolla as they arrive from the front. To-day the Antalo Garrison has come in, and the day after to-morrow the first column of the Magdala force. Cunliffe is with it. . . . . I have hitherto been complaining of want of work, but I shall not have to do so in future, for it is an incessant worry from morning till night. There is a regular scramble on all sides for carriage, and I have to keep my eyes open lest they do us out of mules, which are wanted for all sorts of public purposes. . . . .

18th May.

My own plans are still undecided, but when I do go, it will be to Bombay, as previously mentioned. We have made a party to see the caves of Elephanta, and, if possible, Ellora, and the other sights in the neighbourhood of Bombay, as we shall not have a like opportunity again. . . . .

It is great fun hearing all the stories of the people coming from the front. To-day I had Colonel Phayre's version. He lauds himself a good deal, but then he has not abused other people, which seems the chief characteristic of Abyssinian heroes. The Chief, and indeed everybody, is in high feather at the civil messages received from England. The Queen has telegraphed her thanks to the army in the following terms: "The Queen sends hearty congratulations and thanks to Sir Robert Napier and his gallant force on their brilliant success." The Duke of Cambridge says: "We all rejoice in your great success, and in that of your gallant and enduring army. I congratulate you on your prudence, judgment, and decision." The Secretary of State for India says: "I congratulate your Excellency with all my heart. You have taught us once more what is meant by an army that can go

anywhere and do anything. From first to last all has been done well."

Of course these are very flattering and, in great measure, well-deserved compliments; though the fighting was not very severe, there has been very great exposure and many privations to undergo. . . . .

The fact is that there was no fighting, but there was plenty of slaughter. The poor deluded wretches did not understand our power until we opened on them when jammed in a ravine with artillery and Snider Rifles. They were slain like sheep, and could not make the smallest defence. When Magdala was stormed there were exactly nineteen men with Theodore: ten Chiefs who stuck to him and nine followers. Of course the whole thing was a farce. His army deserted him after the first engagement, saying that they had no chance against our arms. Their shields were not bullet proof, and they never got near enough to throw their spears at us! The deluded creatures were under the impression to the last moment that they could beat us easily, and that we were no better than a parcel of women. "Cows without horns," is one of their favourite names for us. The cold is intense just now, and I have got one in my head of course. I should like to be 1000 feet lower down towards the sea; 8000 is too high for real comfort, unless one had a snug house. . . . . Sir R. Napier is expected here in four or five days; and by that time I shall be on my travels to Zoolla, I suppose. We are getting on famously with the withdrawal, and no hitch has hitherto occurred, although the pass road has been swept away more than once. I shall come in for the monsoon between Aden and Bombay, but it will not last long, and won't I be thankful to be on shore again? . . . .

ZOOLLA, *26th May* 1868.

. . . . To-day I received a letter from Sir R. Napier, thanking me for my services at Zoolla and Senafe, and saying that he regretted his inability to avail himself of my services in front, owing to circumstances, etc., and he says he will bring under the notice of the Governor-General of

India the efficient manner in which I brought my brigade to Abyssinia. This is all very nice, but fair words butter no parsnips, and I shall reserve my rejoicings till I see what more substantial rewards are to be conferred. . . . .

I have been here for two days, and am nearly dead with the heat. I don't think I ever felt it as much as I do now, although the thermometer does not rise within 8° or 10° of what it did before I left Zoolla in March. Roberts, Cunliffe, and Kennedy go with me to-morrow in the Krishna steamer, and, if possible, Major Hills, so we shall have a jolly party. . . . . I cannot tell you anything about my movements till I get to Bombay. Whether I am to be a Brigadier or Quarter-Master-General is uncertain. . . . . I shall be satisfied with a Brigade and an early promise of a Division. . . . .

Our party is dwindling down to very small proportions. Kennedy goes to Calcutta and Roberts has to wait till the entire force embarks. It is a horrid bore, for we have only got three left, and there is not even enough for a whist party. . . . .

And so Stewart proceeded to Bombay, arriving there on the 8th June and eventually, in recognition of his services in Abyssinia, he was created a Companion of the Bath.

CHAPTER X

IN COMMAND AT PESHAWUR, 1868-1869.

AFTER landing at Bombay, Donald Stewart journeyed to Simla *viâ* Nagpore, and in July he was gazetted to the command of the Peshawur District. At that time Peshawur was also the Head Quarters of a Division of the army, under the immediate command of General O'Grady Haly. Early in 1869 Peshawur became an independent Frontier District, of which Stewart retained the command.

Colonel Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

BOMBAY, 9*th June* 1868.

We arrived here yesterday after a very successful trip of ten days from Zoolla. The latter part of the voyage was a little rough, and I had to lie down a great deal, but I was never sick. On landing I got a copy of G.O. appointing me to the Brigade Staff, but it was not very clear whether I am posted to Peshawur or not. . . . .

NAGPORE, 14*th June* 1868.

. . . . . I was disappointed at not getting letters of the 15th at Bombay, because before that date you must have received my letter requesting you to send one to wait arrival at Bombay, and then to Simla to Norman's care. We had a miserable journey thus far, and got drenched whilst changing carriages at a place where a bridge broke down.

SIMLA, 29*th June* 1868.

. . . . . I came up here for three days, but my visit has been extended to six. I was very averse to staying so long, as I lose 50 rupees a day, and 300 rupees for a visit, besides travelling expenses, is rather a costly bit of pleasuring. However, everybody pressed me so to remain that I could not well avoid giving in. The Chief asked me to stay with them, but I went of course to Norman. . . . .

LAHORE, 4*th July* 1868.

As I am spending a very lively day at the dawk bungalow at Meean Meer, I cannot do better than employ myself by writing to you. I left Simla the day before yesterday, rode straight to Kalka, thence by anna-a-miler[1] to Umballa, where Murray was ready with my dak gharri packed. I jumped into it at once, and started for Lahore. After all sorts of unlooked-for delays, and a loss of six and a half hours in crossing the Sutlej at Loodiana, I reached the railway station at the Beas this morning just as the train was starting for Lahore. I got the guard to keep the train for a few minutes whilst my baggage was coming up, and here I am in forty-four hours from Simla, not bad going for an old man. I feel the heat a great deal, though it does not appear to do me any harm. . . . .

Brigadier-General Stewart to Mrs Stewart (as are all subsequent letters in this chapter).

PESHAWUR, 17*th September* 1868.

. . . . . 22*nd*.—I have not a word of news for you except that old General Haly returns this evening, and I shall not be the only luminary at Peshawur. He has been away on leave during the hot weather, and I have had everything my own way, and I don't much like the notion of this being the end of my reign. There is some excitement here about the expedition against the Cis-Indus tribes in

[1] A postal van which carried passengers at the rate of one anna per mile.

North Hazara, who have been kicking up their heels, but I fancy the people on this side of the river will let them fight their own battles, as they must know we have a large force collected which would make short work with any numbers of them. . . . . George Hall's regiment has been warned for service, much to their delight, as on all previous occasions Fane's corps was the favoured one. However, I took the first for duty, and nobody can grumble. Besides, I should like to give the Hindustanis a fair chance, as none of them have been employed since the mutiny, and they are much dispirited in consequence. The Head Quarters camp is to be formed at Umballa, and I sincerely trust they won't come here, for they are a bore, and the Chief has made himself most unpopular here by cutting off all our water, to the utter ruin of our gardens and grass plots. . . . .

PESHAWUR, 12*th October* 1868.

. . . . . 14*th*.—The little campaign in Hazara is at an end; one Sepoy was killed and six or seven wounded out of a force of some sixteen regiments, and no end of guns employed. No one seems to understand the reason for collecting so many troops; they say they have killed a lot of the enemy, but no one has *seen* any of the dead. . . . .

PESHAWUR, 28*th October* 1868.

. . . . . It is quite clear that our relations with Afghanistan are not to remain as heretofore, but it is probable that the Government in this country and at home have not yet decided what form our interference is to take. Some people are for boldly taking possession of Afghanistan, and others for subsidizing that country. There are serious objections to both plans, as well as to the occupation of the border passes, which are occupied by tribes who are virtually independent. It is a very difficult nut to crack, and requires great caution lest we involve ourselves in useless wars, which would be playing the game of Russia. Something, however, must be done, for the people in these parts talk of nothing else but of Russia and Russian conquest in Turkestan.

The Elephant Battery, Peshawur.

[*To face p.* 174.

The Hazara affair, which led to the collection of an army as large as that of Abyssinia has ended in smoke. It was a miserable scrimmage which could have been settled with a couple of native regiments and a brace of mountain guns. The officers of the force were disgusted because there was no enemy to fight!! But this might have been expected, as the Hill people are not such fools as to wait to be crushed by a large army. They fight when the odds are tolerably fair, and not otherwise. I fancy several lakhs of rupees have been spent on this miserable business, which would have been more profitably employed in feeding the starving populations in the north-west provinces and Rajpootana. Things are nearly at famine prices, and chiefly on account of the large supplies required for the troops in Hazara. . . . . The weather is now charming, and I should like to be out of doors all day, but there is nothing to be done till the hunting commences, and the troops are so overworked that I don't like to bother them with parades. There is still a report that the Governor-General is coming up, but Sher Ali[1] is so employed at Cabul in holding his ground that it is not likely he can spare time for visits of ceremony. It is reported that he wants to give us Jelalabad, and it is not improbable that our outposts will be established there a year or two hence. I should like a command of that sort, and I hope I shall be on the spot if any move of that sort is in contemplation. . . . .

PESHAWUR, *5th November* 1868.

. . . . . We are in great uncertainty here about the Governor-General's visit. It seems he is anxious to meet the ruler of Afghanistan, but the latter is, we hear, unable to come down on account of the state of the country. His nephew is still in the field in Balkh, and everything is at sixes and sevens. There are all sorts of rumours flying about, but we may presume that all are not absolutely groundless. One story is that Sher Ali wants us to occupy Jelalabad and to give him a monthly subsidy. This is not likely to be true, as the Afghans, though ready

[1] The Afghan Amir.

enough to take our money, are not fond of giving up an inch of their territory, barren though it be. However, something is in the wind, as all the regiments recently employed in Hazara are halted between this and Pindi, ready to move on Peshawur at a moment's notice. It is a great bore having these swells on one's head, as it will compel me to get a new set of dress uniform, which I wished to avoid till I get home, when I could have the things made up properly. . . . .

PESHAWUR, *9th November* 1868.

. . . . . *10th.*—I have been out all the morning hunting, and enjoyed the ride very much, although we had not much sport. We had one or two short runs, but there were so many gardens and holes about, that the jackals disappeared before we could get them into fair hunting country. The waler comes out strong on these occasions and jumps capitally. My arabs are too good for this sort of work, so I keep them for parades and cantonment work. . . . .

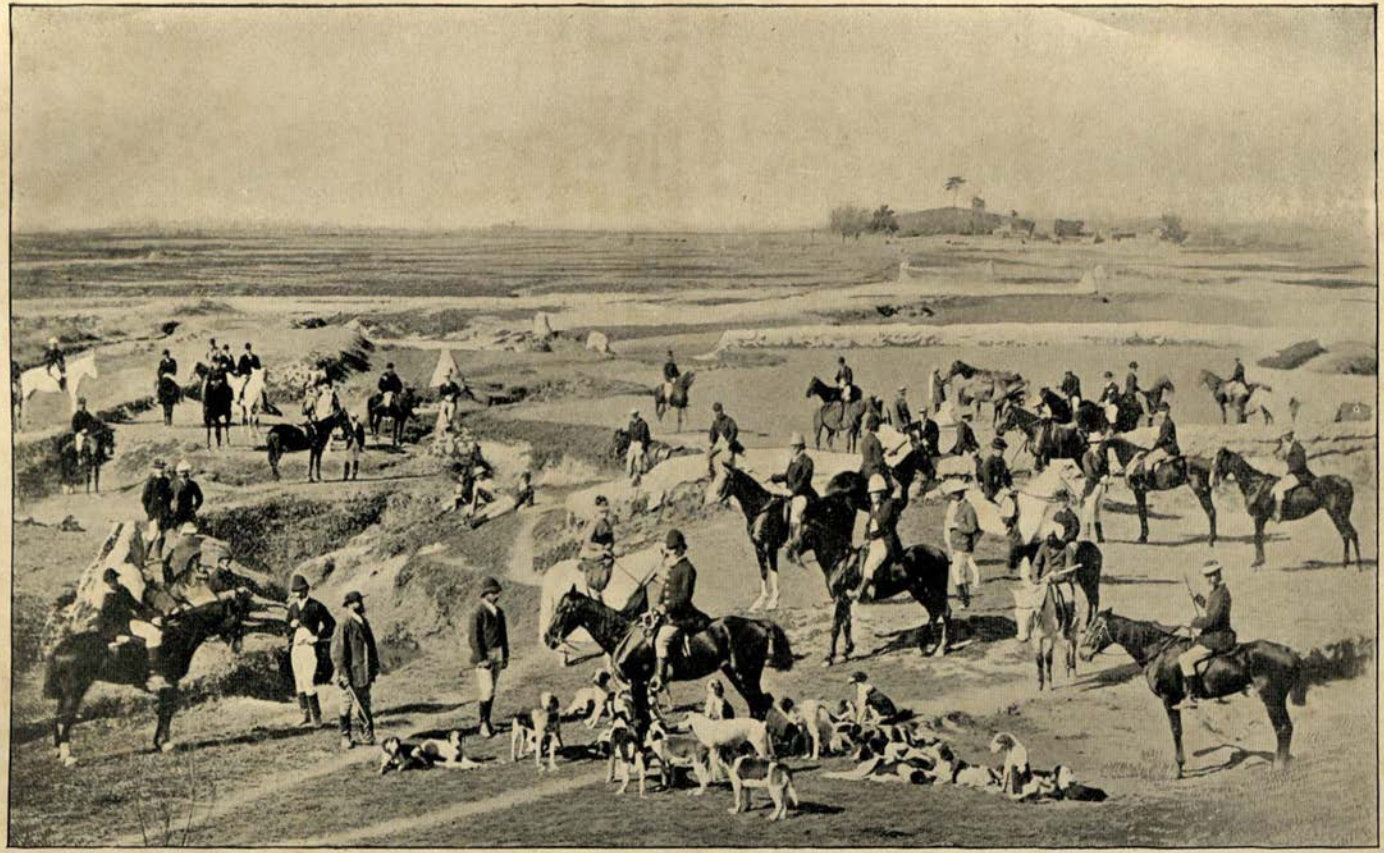
PESHAWUR, *19th November* 1868.

. . . . . We have been quite gay here of late. Sir Donald M'Leod[1] paid us a visit, and we broke out into dinner-parties and durbars for a season, but the Lieutenant-Governor having taken his departure, we return to our routine of dulness. Fortunately, the days are short, and I have plenty of employment. . . . .

PESHAWUR, *9th December* 1868.

. . . . Last night we had a severe earthquake, which startled us not a little. It took place about a quarter past one and was equal to the worst I have ever felt, although it was not accompanied by the usual noises. I tried to strike a light in order that I might see by the watch how long it continued, but a tremendous shake made me bolt under an arch, which is, I am told, the safest place, and the matches would not light, so I was in a pickle, as I did not like to run out into the cold without my clothes. I could not have been particularly alarmed when the dread of

[1] The Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab.



The Peshawur Vale Hunt. [*To face p.* 176.

cold overcame the terrors of the earthquake. A great lump of plaster fell from the roof of my room, and I thought the house was coming down, but, after all, it was not much damaged. We have had three shocks lately, so there is something lively going on in these parts. . . . .

PESHAWUR, 13*th December* 1868.

. . . . . Peshawur, as far as society goes, is very stupid. There are a lot of nice people here, too, but there is no leader, and there is an air of dulness about it which is remarkable. I am personally as busy as a bee all day, and have hardly time to get through my work. I hunt a good deal, three or four times a week, and do some croquet in the afternoons. Parade and duty fill up the gaps pretty well. . . . . The weather is now changing, a bright sun and very cold, but a splendid view of the hills all round. I am sure you would like to be here at this season, and Peshawur is enormously improved since the trees have grown up. All the new regiments seem delighted with the place, but I daresay they will not care so much about it in the months of July and August. . . . .

PESHAWUR, 1*st February* 1869.

. . . . . They have made the Peshawur district an independent command from the 1st March. This is very nice for me, but as my stay will be short, I shall not enjoy very long my independence. Old Haly and his staff remove to Pindi, and I command the troops on this side of the Indus, a very pretty force of three British regiments, four batteries British Artillery, three regiments of Cavalry, and five regiments of Native Infantry, besides Sappers. A very jolly force, which I should like to send into Afghanistan or anywhere else, but all chance of service in that quarter is for the present knocked on the head, because Sher Ali has completely defeated his brother and nephew, and is now undisputed ruler in Cabul. . . . . I had a splendid day with the hounds yesterday, but I fancy I got cold coming home, for I am very stiff about the waist to-day. The meet was about 18 miles off, and though we started after an early breakfast, we did not get home till nearly dark. I got one

fall, but it was the waler's fault, for he stumbled at a little bit of a ditch and rolled over with me; fortunately, the ground was very soft, and I did not get as much as a bruise. He behaved capitally afterwards, although I had to jump into the middle of a deep brook, and carried off two bootfuls of water, which kept my legs cool for the rest of the day. I was afraid of the wetting, but I am all right to-day, barring the stiffness which I put down to old age and the infirmities attendant on advanced years. The papers say that Lord Mayo comes up here in March to meet Sher Ali. I suppose there will be no end of tumashas[1] and parade business, which I don't much care for . . . . .

PESHAWUR, 15*th February* 1869.

Sher Ali, the Afghan Amir, is coming down from Cabul to meet Lord Mayo, and goes as far as Umballa for that purpose. This is a very wise move of Lord Mayo's, for it will increase his dignity and prestige among the independent princes. If we can only make *real* friends of the Afghans we may let Russia do her worst in Central Asia for another century. The new Governor-General and Lady Mayo keep up Dublin state, and are at the same time making themselves uncommonly popular. They spend their money like princes, and evidently have no notion of saving. This is so far good, and as they lay themselves out to be personally agreeable, they are winning all hearts. . . . .

Brigadier-General Stewart was in command at Peshawur at the time when the Amir Sher Ali Khan passed through on his way to and from Umballa, but, unfortunately, no letter describing these visits seems to have been preserved. Stewart was promoted to be a Major-General in December 1868, thus attaining a rank which prevented him from holding a brigade command save under special orders. He continued in his Peshawur

[1] Displays.

appointment, however, until the end of May, when he relinquished it in favour of his old friend Brigadier-General Sam Browne. General Stewart sailed for England in July, having stayed a few weeks at Simla *en route* to Bombay, and having then been introduced to the new Viceroy, Lord Mayo.

"Thus," observes Sir Henry Norman, "by the direct result of promotion for service in the field, Donald Stewart was not only thrown out of employment, but was limited to the English rate of pay—a very inadequate income for an officer with a family. There seemed little hope of his obtaining command of a division for several years. His prospects at this time were not bright. While on leave Stewart resided for some months with his family at Dieppe, and only left when the Germans approached in the Franco-Prussian war. Soon after the war broke out, the Governor-General had under consideration the question of attaching Indian officers to the Head Quarters of the French and German armies, in order that they might gain experience of war in Europe, and it was settled that there could not be better selections than those of Harry Lumsden and Donald Stewart, both of whom were at home and unemployed. I understand that a recommendation to this effect was made by the Governor-General, but nothing came of it."

CHAPTER XI

FROM ENGLAND TO THE ANDAMAN ISLANDS.

When Major-General Stewart left India for England in July 1869, neither he nor his friends had any idea that the next field of action which he was destined to occupy would be the Andaman Islands, in the Bay of Bengal. Promotion to the rank of a Major-General in times of peace lifted him beyond the chance of immediate employment in his own profession. As he well knew, several years must elapse before his turn came to be the General of an Indian Division, and the period of waiting, as an unemployed officer, could not be otherwise than tedious to a man of Stewart's love of activity, and distressing to the father of sons and daughters who found himself reduced to mere subsistence allowances, at a time when the education of his family was at a most expensive stage. When, therefore, in the early part of 1871, the Viceroy, Lord Mayo, who had seen General Stewart at Simla, and who had doubtless heard much of his capacity to do with his might whatever came to his hand to perform, made him the offer of the Superintendentship of the Andaman and Nicobar islands, the appointment was accepted as affording an immediate relief to the *ennui* of inaction and the pain of the *res angusta*

domi. General Stewart started for India early in May. The story of his progress from England to Port Blair is sufficiently told by himself in his letters to his wife.

Major-General Stewart to Mrs Stewart (as are all subsequent letters in this chapter).

HOTEL AUSTRIA, INNSBRUCK, 12*th May* 1871.

I hope you got the letter I made over to the porter at Munich and that he did not bag it for the sake of the nine kreutzer stamp. . . . .

I met an old friend to-day at dinner, who is travelling home; he told me that the Andamans were offered to A. B. and refused by him. There were 300 applicants for this coveted charge. . . . . The journey to-day from Munich to this place was glorious almost all the way through the Alps, the snow being nearly within cannon-shot at times. This is a very quaint town; the capital of the Tyrol and a favourite residence of the Emperor's. It is just at the foot of some peaks which rise straight up nearly 8000 feet, and you are within an hour's walk of the snow. I have hard work before me, though; to-morrow night I shall sleep at Verona, and from that place I have to go straight through to Brindisi without stopping. . . . .

SIMLA, 8*th June* 1871.

I arrived here yesterday evening from Bombay and beat the mail by some hours. The journey from Bombay was fatiguing, but I came through and stopped nowhere except an hour at Kalka[1] for a bath and breakfast. . . . . To-night there is an "At Home" at Government House, and I am told that Lady Mayo is looking forward to having me at her picnics, etc., as amusing men are scarce. If she only knew how dull and stupid I have become, she would not be so anxious to see me.

[1] At the foot of the Simla hills.

9th June.

I went to the "At Home" last night and met no end of old friends. It was just like going home after a long absence. . . . . It was rather a bore having to answer so many enquiries, as I had to meet, about the Andamans. But I have now got used to it, and I daresay my rank will *give dignity* to a position which was hardly considered suitable to it. They seem to think a great deal of the business here, and I have large boxes of correspondence to go through and give opinions on matters which are totally new to me. They are building a steamer for me in England, I am told, so you will have plenty of yachting if you come out. They all say the house is a very nice one and the scenery of the islands is lovely. The great drawback at present seems to be the irregular mode of communication, but Bayley[1] says they contemplate improving it. . . . . So far as I can make out there is only a steamer from Calcutta every six weeks, but no one has been able to tell me positively. . . . . I think I shall keep a sort of diary, as it will be impossible to give you all the information you would like to have in a letter hurriedly written as the mail goes out. . . . .

SIMLA, 21*st June* 1871.

. . . . . I attended Lady Napier's evening meeting last Friday, and was most graciously received by her and the Commander-in Chief.[2] I had a long chat with Lord Napier, who promised to assist some of my Andaman schemes, and when I was bidding him good-bye he said: "I hope to see you back among us before long." Of course I replied that I should willingly return, and that, in fact, it would chiefly depend on him. Some people here think I have some chance of succeeding Norman in Council, but I cannot say I see any prospect of it myself. At the same time, I know not who has a better chance than myself. . . . . If

[1] Mr (afterwards Sir) Clive Bayley, the Home Secretary to the Government of India.

[2] Lord Napier of Magdala.

the Andamans suit me as regards climate, I shall probably hang on there till I get a Division. It is still my intention to look out for Khatmandoo,[1] but of course it is unlikely that I should get the appointment, unless my work at Port Blair brings me much into notice of a favourable kind. The plains are now so cool after the late rainfall that I am longing to be at work. The four days' voyage from the Sand Heads are to be dreaded, but I daresay it will not be very rough, as the monsoon does not greatly affect the Bay of Bengal. . . . . I believe all the servants are *convicts*. I shall take a cook from Calcutta if I can get one, together with a bearer and khidmutgar, as I cannot say I fancy the idea of being served by murderers and poisoners. . . . . I have just heard from Norman that the Governor-General has sanctioned my steamer, and his despatch goes home by the present mail. It will not be out much under a year, and till then the contract with the British India Steam Company is to be renewed. This only gives regular communication once in six weeks, but there are occasional visits of trading vessels by which letters are received. . . . . It is a dreadful idea that we can only hear from each other once in six weeks, but I suppose we shall get accustomed to it for a short time. . . . .

SIMLA, 28*th July* 1871.

. . . . . The Deputy-Superintendent (Andamans) has sent me a long letter to-day, in which he gives me a great many hints that will be useful to me, but he shows plainly that everybody is very discontented at Port Blair, and all seem anxious to get away. They are badly paid and have more hard work than falls to the lot of officials in other parts of the country; then there is no promotion, and that is always fatal to harmony and good fellowship. . . . .

SIMLA, 10*th August* 1871.

. . . . . I have determined on remaining here till the end of September as I am not fit to go by the next steamer, which leaves Calcutta on the 18th. I am, however, getting strong, and have put up 4½ lbs. in the last week. . . . .

[1] *I.e.* the appointment of Resident at Nepal.

While General Stewart was at Simla he appears to have suffered from an illness which, though it greatly delayed the taking up of his new office, gave him full opportunity of studying official papers connected with the history of the Andaman settlement, and of considering the various questions connected with its management, which were then engaging the attention of the Governor-General. In many departments there was an urgent need of reform. There was a dangerous absence of the discipline and precautions necessary for the safe custody of the 8000 most desperate criminals in Upper India, many of them from the fierce tribes of the north-west frontier, and for the most part life-prisoners, with the recklessness of men for whom life had no further hope. The cost of the establishment was excessive. Insubordination prevailed among the officials, and drunkenness, profligacy, and violence among the prisoners. Lord Mayo had resolved to place the settlement on a sounder footing, to render surveillance more effectual, and to open up to the convicts the possibility of improving their lot by industry and good conduct. For carrying out these measures "a man"—to use the Viceroy's phrase—"was required," and the necessary man was found in General Stewart. "The charge which General Stewart is about to assume," wrote Lord Mayo, in appointing him Superintendent of the settlement, "is one of great responsibility. In fact, I hardly know of any charge under the Government of India, which will afford greater scope for ability and energy, or where a greater public service can be performed." The Superintendent was to be armed with wide

discretionary powers. There was to be no appeal from his decision except to the Viceroy. The task was no light one. A large, sullen, demoralised mass of humanity, lacking in all the motives which make for good, and long accustomed to extraneous means of support, had to be disciplined into order, stimulated with hope, and trained to useful exertion. Lord Mayo was deeply interested in the success of the scheme. He was in frequent communication with General Stewart at Simla, and so important was the task entrusted to the new Superintendent considered, that the Viceroy determined to include a visit to the Andamans in his next cold weather tour, in order that he might judge for himself of the progress that had been made in the introduction of the new system of management.

From Major-General Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

SIMLA, 15*th August* 1871.

. . . . . There is not much news to give you from here; we are vegetating in a very mouldy way, the rains being almost as unceasing as ever. For some evenings we have been able to get out, but the daily rainfall still amounts to 1½ inches. Simla is just like a huge sponge; water oozes out of every pore and saturates everything penetrable by water or damp. I am getting wonderfully well and strong, though it has been considered necessary to keep me here another six weeks. . . . . Even if I had been well enough to start I could not have left Simla during the last week, as both roads are now impassable, the suspension bridge near Hurreepore having been carried away. There is the greatest difficulty in getting the mails up from Umballa. . . . .

Now that I am getting strong and well I long to be at work, and I do not like the notion of remaining up here doing little or nothing. I study law and the regulations,

and I carry on a good deal of Port Blair work with the Government, but it is not satisfactory to have to give opinions which I may have occasion hereafter to modify when I am better acquainted with the actual working of the settlements. I am, however, doing one useful work of great importance. I am getting a code of laws and rules drawn up, which will be a guide to those who have to administer the affairs of Port Blair and the Nicobars. Hitherto they have been working on a happy-go-lucky system which has in some respects answered its purpose, but I want to see something like order established. . . . .

17th August.

. . . . Bobs was told yesterday that the Chief had selected him for the Lushai Expedition, which comes off in the cold weather. He is of course delighted, as it will ensure him the C.B. and the Deputyship[1] whenever it becomes vacant. . . . . They are to have two columns: one starts from Assam and the other from Chittagong, and they both meet in the Lushai country. There will be much hard work and exposure, but little or no fighting, as these people have neither towns, villages, nor arms, they are perfect savages, and change their habitat every year. . . . .

ELLERSLIE,[2] SIMLA, *6th September* 1871.

This will be my last letter from Ellerslie except one, which I shall post next week before starting for Calcutta. . . . . I am in better health than I have been for many years, and I am most thankful that I was induced to remain for treatment. My steamer leaves Calcutta for Port Blair on the 29th, so I shall have eight days to get what I require for the house. The furniture is the expensive part of the business, but it must be got together somehow. This and the expense of bringing you all out will be a dreadful pull on me for some time to come. . . . . Did I tell you that I had got a beautiful Trichinopoly bracelet for Mrs Roberts.

[1] Deputy Quarter-Master-Generalship.

[2] The name of the house where he was living with his friends Colonel and Mrs Roberts.

It is a very small return for all their kindness and attention to me since I came here. Indeed, I attribute my recovery almost entirely to their watchfulness and care of me, and I am very sure that no one else except yourself would have taken such trouble with a sick friend. . . . .

ELLERSLIE, SIMLA, 11*th September* 1871.

This will be my last letter from Simla, as we[1] start on the morning of the 16th, sleep at Kussowlie that night, and then run through to Allahabad, where we stay a day with Tombs. For some reasons I am sorry to leave this place; the weather is simply heavenly now that the rains have ceased, but on the whole I am very tired of doing nothing, and shall be glad to buckle into harness at the Andamans. Colonel James, who has made a very interesting report of the settlement, has been giving me no end of hints about matters in general. He says that ultimately the Head Quarters of the place will be Mount Harriet, but of course the great swamp at the foot of the hill must be reclaimed first. I shall devote much of my energies to this point, as the swamp contains about 40,000 acres of the finest soil in the world, and all we have to do is to bund[2] out the sea. From the way that visitors talk of the place it must in many ways be an agreeable place to live in, and Mount Harriet must be nearly as cool as Simla during the summer months. . . . . Last night I went to a ball at Government House for the purpose of taking leave of my friends. It was a very gay affair. Lord Mayo told me that he would probably look me up in the cold weather. I expected something of the kind, but he is so very reticent about his movements that I did not think he would give it out now. . . . . The Governor-General hopes that we may be able to turn Mount Harriet into a sanatorium for Calcutta. It is impossible to say what the place may be a few years hence, but nothing can be done till the mangrove swamps round the islands have been dammed up and brought under cultivation.

[1] *I.e.* himself and Colonel Roberts, the latter of whom was on his way to the Lushai Expedition.

[2] *I.e.* dyke.

14th September.

. . . . . This is the anniversary of the assault of Delhi, and we all dine with Norman in honour of the event. My traps go off to-morrow, and the next day we start for Kussowlie. . . . .

U.S. CLUB, CALCUTTA, *23rd September* 1871.

. . . . . We had a tolerably comfortable journey, as there had been a good deal of rain in Bengal just before we came down. Bobs did not come the whole way with me, as he had to branch off to Bhagulpore to look after coolies which were supposed to be raising in that neighbourhood. However he found none, and came on to Calcutta the following day. . . . . .

You will have seen in the telegrams long before this reaches you that Chief Justice[1] Norman was assassinated the other day as he was entering Court. They have as yet been quite unable to discover what induced the wretch to stab him. The man says he knows nothing about the matter; he was fated to kill Norman and to suffer for the same, whatever punishment may be awarded. It is a very horrid case, because it serves to show how easily any man's life may be taken away in this country. Though he was a severe judge he was one of the best-hearted and most benevolent, charitable men in Calcutta. . . . .

27th September.

I have just returned from a visit to the Presidency Jail, which is really worth seeing. I fear it will be a long time before my jails are in such good order, but then they have unlimited means as to funds and appliances. Among other criminals I saw the man who stabbed Norman. He is an Afghan, and seems a very determined ruffian. He is quite cool and collected, but he will reveal nothing, so that we are at a loss to know whether the crime is a mere piece of fanaticism or the result of a policy. . . . . I hope in my letter from Port Blair to be able to say what things we shall want purchased at home, so that you may be able to start them off a week or so ahead of yourself.

[1] Of the Calcutta High Court.

PORT BLAIR, *12th October* 1871.

. . . . . I arrived here on the morning of the 4th, and was received in state by the whole settlement, convicts and all. Major Playfair, the Deputy-Superintendent, took me in for a couple of days, but yesterday my own servants provided for my wants, and I am beginning to go on my own hook. . . . .

The country round is very pretty and the bay is lovely. Ross Island itself is not much to look at, but all round my house there are no end of trees and plants. The place is kept in capital order, and there is a beautiful little church at the garden-gate. The house is queer, but we shall get accustomed to it; it is well ventilated, indeed we might as well be in the open as inside—at this moment I am writing in a breeze which nearly blows me out of the house; it is very cool and nice, and I should be quite happy if you were here to put the place in order. . . . . I have only to give an order here and the work is done, how I know not, and I have not had time to inquire, but it is all executed by robbers, murderers, and such like cattle.

. . . . . You must select a piano when you are in Calcutta. There is one here which would do very well for keeping fowls in, but as a musical instrument it has no sound of any sort. You must select an instrument specially made for a damp climate, as the ordinary sort soon go to pieces here; there is not a soul in the place who knows how to tune one. . . . .

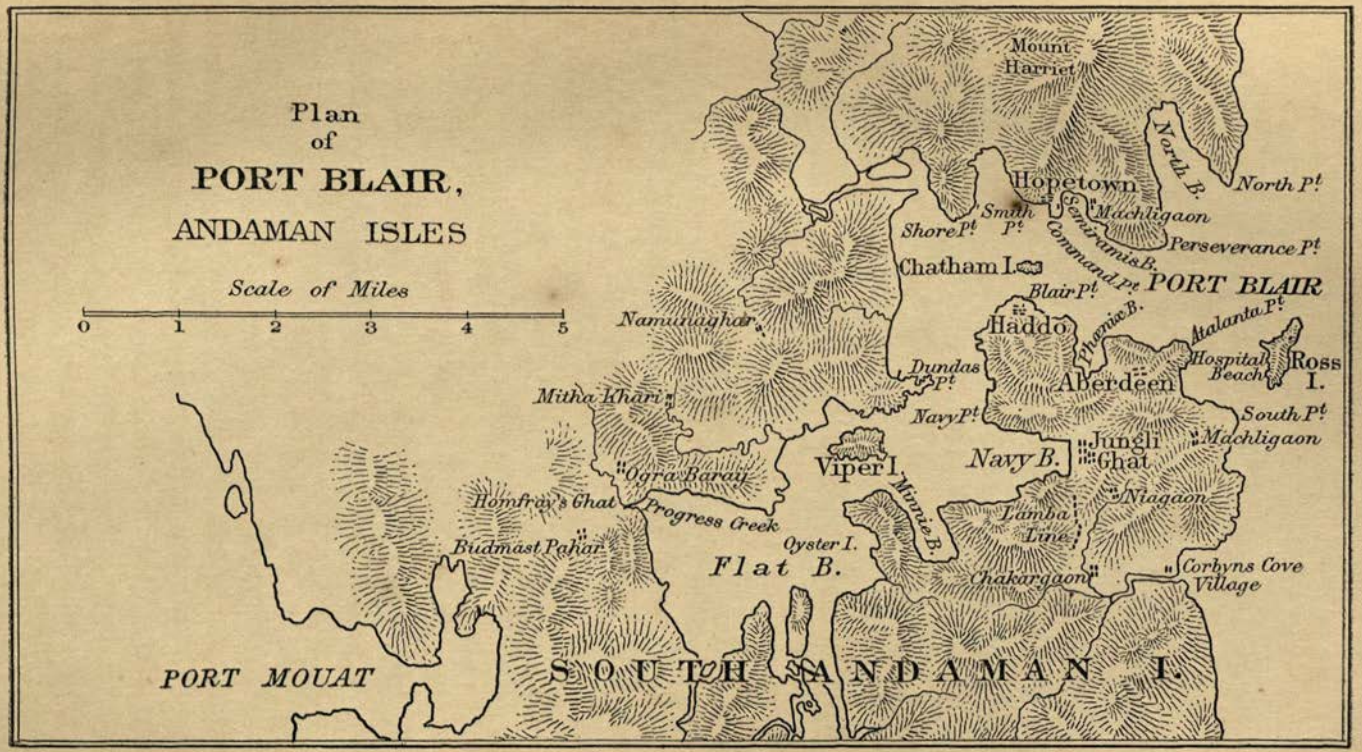
CHAPTER XII

IN THE ANDAMANS

HERE, unfortunately, letters from General Stewart relating to this period of his life come to an end. Mrs Stewart and her two eldest daughters joined him in the Andamans in the spring of 1872, and they were for the most part together for the next five or six years, so that few, if any, letters passed between them. For a brief view of Stewart's life in the Andamans, we are indebted to his friend the Rev. T. J. L. Warneford,[1] a chaplain on the Bengal Establishment, who was on duty at Ross Island at the time; to Sir Henry Norman, who visited the settlement on duty in 1874, and to some official records, copies of which have been furnished by the present Chief Commissioner, Colonel Sir Richard Temple. Mr Warneford writes:—

"I knew Sir Donald Stewart first in 1871, when he came as Superintendent to the Andaman Islands, where I was stationed as chaplain to the European community. The Head Quarters were on Ross Island, at the entrance to the bay called Port Blair. Here were placed stone barracks for the European troops, and the houses or bungalows of the principal officers of the station, with

[1] Now Vicar of Sattley, County Durham.



Plan of Port Blair, Andaman Isles. [*To face p.* 190.

the church, hospitals, and accommodation for a certain number of convicts from India, the greater portions of the convict community being located at the various out stations, Chatham Island, Viper Island, and settlements on the mainland of the Andaman Island, adjacent to the bay.

"At the time of the arrival of General Stewart as Superintendent, much was needed to be done, and a firm hand required in the officer chosen by Government to administer the settlement. General Stewart soon showed his ability as an administrator, and, in a short time, the various departments were in good working order. It was very shortly after his arrival at Port Blair that the unfortunate visit of Lord Mayo, Viceroy of India, took place. On the 8th February His Excellency arrived in H.M.S. *Glasgow* with Lady Mayo and a large party of officials and others. About 10 A.M. he landed on Ross Island, the *Glasgow* being moored in the bay, not far from the jetty. After inspecting Ross Island, Lord Mayo, accompanied by General Stewart and several other officers, proceeded in the *Glasgow's* steam launch up the bay to inspect Viper Island, about 5 miles off, where the worst class of convicts were located, and where, if anywhere, danger was to be apprehended. However, all precautions possible had been taken to ensure the Viceroy's safety, and the official inspection passed off well. After leaving Viper Island at about 5 P.M. in the same steam launch, the party were to return to the *Glasgow*, where General Stewart and other officers of the station were to dine with the Viceroy. The evening was a lovely one, the heat of the day was over, the sea in the bay calm, and a gentle north-east wind blowing.

"Finding that his visit to Viper Island was over earlier than he had expected, the Viceroy suggested to General Stewart that they should land at Hopetown, at the foot of Mount Harriet, a hill rising to about 1100 feet, and on their way down the bay. The guard, which had been detailed to attend the Viceroy and party during the inspection, had been dismissed as soon as the Viper Island

visit was over, and General Stewart at once tried to dissuade the Viceroy, on that account, from landing anywhere, though at Hopetown no danger could be apprehended, as there were only a few self-supporting convicts of good character allowed in that part of the settlement. The Viceroy, however, seemed bent upon going up Mount Harriet, and as General Stewart said to me, he could do no more than he had done without being rude. He raised one other objection to their going up the Mount that evening, namely, that there was only one pony, and the climb was a stiff one. The Viceroy's reply was, 'Never mind, no one expects us, we will ride and tie.'

"Accordingly, the launch's head was turned to Hopetown, where was a low-lying stone jetty running out some distance into the water, as it was a shallow muddy bottom there. The ascent of Mount Harriet was accomplished, and the party stayed at the top (where there is a Government bungalow) to see the sun set. The Viceroy was greatly struck by the view of the beautiful bay, which he said to General Stewart reminded him of Dublin Bay. The sun having set, they began the descent, and, as in the tropics there is virtually no twilight, it was soon dark, especially on a road winding through tall jungle trees, as it did. Coming near Hopetown jetty, the party were met by a Jemadar (native officer) and some native coolies carrying torches.

"Now I quote General Stewart's own words to me, as soon as he landed at Ross Island. 'When we got to the shore end of the jetty, nearly up to the *Glasgow* launch, which was lying alongside, I turned back for a moment to give an order to the Jemadar in charge, about having elephants, ponies, and jampans ready early the next morning, when Lord and Lady Mayo, and all the party were going to visit Mount Harriet before breakfast. Directly after I had turned I heard a thud, and turning round saw the Viceroy fall over the edge of the stone jetty into the water, which was at that time of the tide only 2 or 3 feet deep just there. I helped him up to the jetty, and he said: "I have been stabbed." He was placed in the

launch, with his head leaning on my shoulder, but he never spoke again.'

"The above are, as far as I can remember, General Stewart's exact words. I was entertaining the captain of the *Dacca* and the chaplain of the *Glasgow* at dinner that evening on Ross Island, when at about 8 o'clock General Stewart came up the steps, and said at once: 'The Governor-General has been murdered,' and he appeared greatly moved. The above conversation took place, and I went with the General up to his bungalow, which was next above mine on the island. He set to work at once to write despatches to be sent off by the *Dacca* and *Nemesis* steamers early in the morning.[1] All that a man could do General Stewart did to ensure Lord Mayo's safety. I had several opportunities of seeing the man who did the deed, as, with Major Bartholomew, I visited him in his cell at the European Troops' Barracks. He then said that he had a grievance against the English Raj (Government), and that he intended to kill the Burra Sahib (or Superintendent), but that when he heard that the Burra Lord Sahib (or Governor-General) was coming down, he determined to wait his arrival, and then kill him and the Superintendent as well. For this purpose he got a common kitchen knife, about 7 inches long, and went down to the rocks, near the jetty, where he sharpened it, and prayed to Allah to give him an opportunity of carrying out his intentions. When he heard the guns fired that morning (for he could not see the *Glasgow*, from Hopetown) he knew the Governor-General had arrived, but he did not know when he would visit Hopetown. The rest we know—how he mixed with the torch-bearers, and so got on to the jetty, and just as General Stewart turned round, gave the stabs (two) which killed the Earl of Mayo. He always said he intended the second blow for General Stewart, not because he bore him any

[1] It is related that as Donald Stewart sat alone, far into the night, writing these despatches, he was interrupted by a messenger from H.M.S. *Glasgow*, who came in quest of plaster of Paris, wherewith to take a cast of the murdered Viceroy's face.

grudge, but because he was the 'Burra Sahib,' or great man representing the English rule."[1]

Subsequent enquiries threw but little light on the secret history, if such there were, of the crime. The assassin was a tribesman from the Punjab frontier; the crime for which he was sentenced to transportation was a vendetta, carried out in proper Afghan fashion. On the British side of the border it was murder. He, no doubt, regarded it as among the many mysteries of British rule that a man should suffer life-long exile for so natural an act as the slaying of an hereditary foe in the development of a family quarrel. He died by the hand of the executioner, exulting in his achievement. He would acknowledge no accomplice. God, he said, was his partner in the deed. Meanwhile, in a few hours one ship was speeding to Madras, whose Governor, Lord Napier of Ettrick, became, *ipso facto*, acting Viceroy; another was bearing the fatal tidings to Saugor Island on the Bengal Coast, whence the telegraph conveyed them to the capital. On the subject of the murder of Lord Mayo, Sir Henry Norman, who at the time was a member of the Viceroy's Council, writes as follows:—

"In the month of January 1872, Lord Mayo left Calcutta in order to visit British Burma and Port Blair. I may here mention that a large party of officials and friends were invited by Lord Mayo to go with him on this cruise in the British India Company's steamer *Dacca*. Lord Mayo himself and Lady Mayo, with two or three of the

[1] For a more detailed account of the murder of Lord Mayo, see his "Life," by Sir W. W. Hunter, K.C.S.I.

personal staff, Miss Milman, sister of the Bishop of Calcutta, and my unmarried sister, went in the *Glasgow*, the flagship on the last Indian station. I was also to go in the *Glasgow*, and was looking forward to the cruise with much pleasure, when some cause for anxiety arose on the Beloochistan frontier, and almost simultaneously a serious outbreak of the Kookah sect of Sikhs took place in the Loodiana district of the Punjab. In consequence of these events Lord Mayo asked me to forego the trip, as he thought that, in his absence from the telegraph line for several days, my presence with the Council at Calcutta as its military member was desirable. I therefore was not present at the tragic end of the Viceroy.

"The visit to Burma was a great success, but several days had elapsed since we had heard of the Viceroy's departure from Rangoon for Port Blair, when a telegram came from Saugor Island, at the mouth of the Hooghly, to say that the Viceroy had been murdered by a convict at Port Blair on the 8th February. It is difficult to describe the consternation and grief caused by receipt of this message, which was not diminished when the *Dacca* arrived with her passengers, who had been at Port Blair when this unhappy occurrence took place.

"No blame whatever attached to Stewart in this matter. He had arranged a programme of inspection for the day, and measures of precaution for the safety of Lord Mayo had been carefully arranged. About four o'clock Stewart told Lord Mayo that the programme for the day was over, and then Lord Mayo said that, as it was still early, he would like to ascend Mount Harriet, which rises to about 1400 feet from the sea, to have a general view of the whole settlement. I have always understood that Stewart tried to dissuade Lord Mayo from going to Mount Harriet that evening, and that, on the Viceroy deciding to go, he sent a boat off to the other side of the harbour, to Aberdeen, to order a guard of Madras Infantry to be at once sent over for Lord Mayo's protection. This precaution involved considerable delay, and, in fact, the guard had not arrived when Lord Mayo returned to the shore of

the harbour at Hopetown in the growing darkness, when the murder took place."

The premature death by an assassin's hand of a deservedly popular Viceroy touched every Englishman in India to the quick. Lord Mayo was genial, hospitable, a keen sportsman, and an agreeable companion. His tact, candour, and clear judgment enabled him to maintain his ascendancy in a Council of more than average intellectual strength. His sudden end brought home to every mind the innumerable vicissitudes which beset our Imperial work in the East.

The event singularly justified an observation made by Lord Mayo himself, a day or two before its occurrence, with reference to the assassination of the Chief Justice of Bengal. "These things," he said, "when done at all, are done in the moment, and no amount of guards would stop one resolute man's blow." Probably not, if a man is prepared, as here, to sell his life in striking it. The terrible experience of Europe has taught us how practically impossible it is for human vigilance to secure immunity for the objects of the fanatic or madman's malevolence. If it were necessary to particularise the cause of an event which is better to think of simply as a national misfortune, the alteration of the day's programme, which had been carefully thought out by the responsible officials, would probably be regarded as having mainly contributed to the deplorable result. No one has ever called in question Lord Mayo's pronouncement that in respect of the day's proceedings as originally planned, the precautions taken were more than adequate, or the conscientious zeal and anxiety

Hopetown Pier, the scene of Lord Mayo's Assassination.

[*To face p.* 196.

to protect, from all risk, a life which was in a hundred ways invaluable to the country. Some self-searchings were likely to beset the minds of those on whom the main responsibility rested. It was, no doubt, with a view to obviate any such misgiving that Sir John Strachey, upon whom, as Senior Civilian, the acting Viceroyalty until Lord Napier's arrival devolved, wrote the following letter to the Superintendent.

CALCUTTA, 23*rd February* 1872.

MY DEAR STEWART, — Before I cease to act as Governor-General, I must write to you a few lines to assure you of the undiminished confidence of the Government of India, and of the deep sympathy which I feel for you personally in the terrible calamity which has fallen upon us all, and which you must have felt with especial bitterness. Whatever may have been the faults of the system existing at Port Blair, they are faults for which you, who have so lately arrived there, cannot be held responsible, and I and all of us are satisfied that you had spared no precautions to ensure Lord Mayo's personal safety. Lady Mayo has herself told me in the strongest and kindest terms how convinced she is of this. Regarding the measures which the Government of India thinks it desirable to take, I shall write to you separately, and the only object of this letter is to express my sympathy for yourself, and to beg you to believe that no one attaches any blame to you. There is only one thing more that I am anxious to say. It is that I trust, on the part of the Government of India, that you and the officers under your orders at Port Blair will neglect no reasonable precautions to guard against the possible danger of a repetition of these murderous attacks. I am afraid that it can hardly be doubted that these things have a tendency to become —so to speak—epidemic, and, putting all personal considerations aside, it is your duty, on purely public grounds, to bear in mind the extreme importance of doing every-

thing in your power to render attempts of the kind impossible. — Believe me, my dear Stewart, yours very sincerely, JOHN STRACHEY.

The terrible occurrence which has now been briefly described, naturally led to searching enquiries as to the system in force in the islands, and the question whether existing arrangements were susceptible of improvement. Mr John Scarlett Campbell, an able and experienced Civilian, was directed in 1872 to report on the settlement, and to offer such suggestions of reform as he considered the circumstances to demand. His recommendations, and the administrative problems which they involved, were long and anxiously considered, and in 1874, Lord Northbrook, who had succeeded Lord Mayo as Viceroy, advanced the discussion a stage by determining that an officer of the highest standing and ability should again examine the working of the settlement on the spot, and pronounce an opinion on the adequacy of the precautions in force. Sir Henry Norman was selected for the duty. He arrived in May 1874, and has been good enough to give the following account of his visit:

"I proceeded to Port Blair in the Government Steamer, *Enterprise*, with Captain J. P. Steel, of the Royal Engineers, as Secretary, and arrived at Port Blair, much to the surprise of General Stewart and his family. There was then, and unfortunately still is, no telegraphic communication with Port Blair, and only a monthly steamer, so my arrival was quite unexpected, but I had a hearty welcome from my dear old friends, the Stewarts, and their two daughters.

"For several days I made daily excursions in boats with Stewart to the various convict establishments, and made a thorough enquiry into the whole condition of this vast

settlement, which contained more than 10,000 prisoners, nearly all of whom were murderers. Stewart and I had also various conferences as to possible changes in the system.

"Speaking generally, the prisoners were life-convicts, and, except a small proportion of dangerous convicts, who were in confinement in prison on Viper Island, they lived in barracks, and worked under the supervision of well-conducted convict non-commissioned officers. As long as they committed no offence, and did their various tasks, they enjoyed considerable liberty in the day-time, and could rise to responsible posts, and, after long periods, obtain plots of land, and keep cows, or cultivate, and sell their produce to the Commissariat. A considerable number of men were employed in fishing, thus obtaining a wholesome addition to the diet of the prisoners; no sails were allowed in the boats, to prevent escapes. Attempts to escape, however, were not infrequent, both by sea and land. In the latter case the prisoners were generally brought back by the Andamanese, who were gradually learning the rudiments of civilisation, and who were rewarded when an escaped convict was recovered.

"Those who went off to sea generally tied a few bamboos together, and placing on them a vessel of water and a few plantains, and, partly supporting themselves on the bamboos, pushed off from the shore. Some were picked up by ships, others reached the coast of Burma or Bengal alive, and were generally captured by the police and sent back as prisoners, but the great majority were drowned.

"Many of the convicts were employed as domestic servants by the various officers, and there was even a convict band. On the whole, the convicts were well-behaved. Many of them were by no means habitual criminals, and had been respectable members of society, until, from motives of jealousy, or because of some tribal quarrel, they were induced to commit murder. Among the convicts were several hundred women, who were kept separate from the men; but marriage between convicts was not im-

possible in cases where there had been long good conduct on the part of both man and woman, and where there was a fair prospect of their becoming good and useful settlers.

"After my task of inspection and discussion was completed, I prepared my report, and returned to Calcutta to submit it. I made various recommendations, but I need here only allude to two of them.

"There had been much discussion in the Government of India, as to whether any remission of sentence should be possible for the life prisoners in Port Blair, a class which included nearly all who were there. Remission of any kind was stoutly opposed by several authorities; but it seemed to me that it was unwise to extinguish all hope in the minds of the convicts, and would, under the system of comparative freedom, which into the circumstances seemed almost essential, tend to acts of violence. With the concurrence of Stewart, I therefore proposed that a convict, after a long course of good conduct, and on the recommendation of the Chief Commissioner, should be allowed to obtain freedom and to return to India. This recommendation was approved, and I have no doubt that the possibility of obtaining this highly-prized privilege has tended to the peace of the settlement.[1]

"The other recommendation was one as to which I could not consult Stewart. It was that his boat's crew should consist of armed, free police, and not—as had hitherto been the case—of convicts.

"Taking long boat voyages with him, I was struck with the ease in which he could be murdered. Every one in the crew was probably a murderer, including his personal convict-orderly, who usually was in the boat when we visited out-stations. The coxswain had only to quietly

[1] On the 31st August 1874, General Stewart, as Chief Commissioner and Superintendent of the Andaman Islands, with the sanction of Government, issued a code of rules for pardons, based on the foregoing recommendations, which is described by the present Chief Commissioner as "the most important order ever issued" in the Settlement.

unship his tiller and strike Stewart on the head and the deed was done. Then again I thought that, wherever Stewart landed, armed free men should be ready to escort him, and this object would be met by having an armed free police crew, half of whom could land with him. It was difficult for a Chief Commissioner to propose this change, but it seemed my duty to do so, for the murder of the Chief Commissioner might be most disastrous for the Settlement."

A volume of General Stewart's official correspondence from 1871-1875 gives a vivid idea of the multifarious topics with which, as Superintendent and Chief Commissioner, he had to deal. We have now an edict emanating from the Governor-General in Council, and defining the powers of the Chief Commissioner and the obligations of an hierarchy of subordinate authorities; now a protest against the laxity of the High Court in not confirming a sentence of death passed for a murderous assault by a life prisoner on one of his companions; now precautions against import of dangerous drugs; now the conditions under which convicts may be allowed to marry, to possess property, or to correspond with relations. Elsewhere we have the survey and reclamation of new sites, the planting and conservancy of forests, the use of clearings as Government farms, experiments with new reeds and fibres.

In February 1874 General Stewart describes, how, on his arrival, he found every officer in the settlement riding his own hobby—grain, sugar, coffee, cotton, fibres, etc., how effort had been concentrated on sanitation and food stuffs, with excellent results. Then on 29th July 1874 we find the Government of India confirming General Norman's recommendation "that greater precautions should be taken by

officials against personal risk in their intercourse with convicts."

Another set of letters deal with escapes, recaptures of convicts, tours round the Andaman Islands, and proposals for the colonisation of the Nicobar Group,[1] the inhabitants of which were at the most primitive stage, and resented, somewhat stubbornly, the introduction of civilising agencies, the census and such like.

Donald Stewart remained at his post in the Andamans, and carried on its duties, tame as they must have seemed, with energy and success until the spring of 1875. But he was longing to return to military duty, and eventually his wishes were gratified by his appointment to the command of a Division of the Bengal army. Mrs Stewart and her daughters had left Port Blair in the month of April on their way to England, but Stewart, on hearing of his new appointment, was able to prevent their sailing from Calcutta, and they spent the hot weather of 1875 in Simla.

[1] Some 200 miles to the south, where a small convict station had been established.

CHAPTER XIII

IN COMMAND OF THE LAHORE DIVISION

THE next well-defined period of Donald Stewart's life was an uneventful one. Leaving Port Blair in the month of May, he proceeded to the Punjab, and assumed, at Mian Mir, the command of the Lahore Division, in succession to his old friend Sir Charles Reid, late of the Sirmur Gurkha battalion, whose name occurs frequently in the diary and letters written during the siege of Delhi. General Stewart's Assistant Adjutant-General, the principal officer on his staff, was Colonel James Hills,[1] V.C., R.A., one of the heroes of the mutiny, who was destined to win fresh laurels under his Chief in Afghanistan. No event of great importance took place during the years of the Lahore command. As Mrs Stewart was with her husband during the greater part of the time, such letters as passed between them, being probably of ephemeral interest, have not been preserved. Head Quarters were at Mian Mir, while inspection of troops within the Division, *e.g.* at Mooltan, Amritsar, Jullundur, etc., had to be made regularly. During the height of the hot weather the General commanding was permitted to spend some months at the hill-

[1] Now General Sir James Hills-Johnes, G.C.B., V.C.

stations of Dalhousie or Dhurmsala, where considerable bodies of European troops are sent, to avoid the great heat of the summer months, and the fever season which prevails in autumn after the rains of July and August. In the cold weather of 1875-6 General Stewart commanded a division of the army assembled at Delhi on the occasion of the visit of the Prince of Wales, and he took part in the manœuvres performed by the troops under the command of Lord Napier of Magdala. Again, a year later, Stewart commanded a division at the camp of Delhi, when, on the 1st January 1877, the Viceroy, Lord Lytton, proclaimed Her Majesty Queen Victoria as Empress of India. By this time Sir Frederick Haines had succeeded Lord Napier of Magdala as Commander-in-Chief. An interesting episode of Stewart's life in 1877 is thus described by Sir James Hills-Johnes.

"Up to 1877 the General had never shot a tiger, and so I arranged with Tom Gordon[1] to give us a month's sport in the Goozerat district (Bombay). We had some very hard travelling after leaving the railway—in bullock-carriages and on camels—both going and returning, and although Sir Donald was not in the best of health at the time, he had such a power of endurance that he got through the long night and morning of camel-riding wonderfully well, and he was well repaid. Fitzgerald, in the Foreign Department, who had a political charge, first took us into camp and worked the shoot for us, and we got some tigers and panthers, but it was not till we joined Tom Gordon that the sport got very warm. On two occasions Sir Donald had four tigers come up to

[1] Now General Sir Thomas Gordon, K.C.B., K.C.I.E., C.S.I.

his tree; the first time he stopped the tiger and two full-grown cubs, but was unloaded, his gun being jammed, when the tigress came up and walked past him. You can conceive how *mad* he was. Next day, however, the tigress having gone back to her lair, was started, and passing up almost in the same direction, came opposite to Jopp (Major), and was killed. The second occasion, the General was all there, wounding and turning back all four tigers; the cubs on both occasions were nearly full-grown. We had a most happy party. I need not say that the General returned to his command at Lahore thoroughly pleased with his tiger trip, and fully compensated for the length of journey taken and the rough travelling endured."

A detailed account of this expedition, from the pen of Sir Thomas Gordon, was subsequently printed in *Land and Water* in September 1889, from which we learn that, in the Goozerat jungles three tigers and four panthers were killed, and, in the Kharwarra grounds, ten tigers and six panthers.

Mrs Stewart and her daughters went home from Mian Mir early in 1877, and were followed by General Stewart in the hot weather of 1878. Little did he anticipate that he would be re-called to India within a few months, to take up a most important command in the field, in which he was to find the opportunity of performing invaluable services to his country, and to earn for himself great renown and many honours.

CHAPTER XIV

THE SECOND AFGHAN WAR.

IT does not fall within our present purpose to give a complete account of the causes which led to the Afghan wars of 1878-79-80, or a full detail of the events of those wars. Many books have already been published which deal with those subjects. None gives a clearer statement of the policy followed by the British Government of the time than Lady Betty Balfour's account of the Indian administration of her father, Lord Lytton. Important letters and minutes were published in that book for the first time, and it will be convenient to give several extracts from those papers in explaining briefly the circumstances under which General Stewart was appointed to the command of the Southern Afghanistan and Candahar field force in the end of 1878. Up to that time Stewart had had but little concern with Afghanistan or our relations with the Cabul Amir. He had served with his regiment in the frontier station of Peshawur from 1852 to 1856, he had commanded the Peshawur district for some months in 1868-69, and he had seen the Amir, Sher Ali Khan on his journeys to and from the Umballa conference; but it may safely be assumed that his selection for the

command of the Southern army was due to his general reputation as a soldier in the field and to his well-known qualities as a wise and prudent leader of men, and not to any special knowledge of the difficulties of war in Afghanistan, or to any special sympathy or prejudice in favour of the policy of the British Government, in regard to that country. The marked success—the greatness of Stewart's career—from the day when he took over the command of his army at Mooltan in November 1878 till he brought his forces safely through the Khyber to Peshawur in August 1880—was due mainly to the inborn character of the man—to his genius for throwing himself into each day's work as it arose—to his calm and patient courage—to his knowledge of men and affairs, and to his great gift of confident foresight. General Sir Peter Lumsden,[1] writing recently on this subject, says:

"When a Commander had to be selected—the best able not only to handle the force at his command, but also to carry on the important political functions required from him in such a position—the choice fell on General Stewart, who . . . . stood out head and shoulders above any one else."

It was during this period of service in Afghanistan that occurred what may be regarded as the greatest day of Donald Stewart's life—that on which, having despatched General Roberts with a specially chosen force to meet Ayub Khan at Candahar, he himself marched out of Cabul with the rest of the British troops, having placed on

[1] Adjutant-General in India in 1878-79.

record his courageous conviction, fully realised in the sequel, that the advance and the withdrawal which he had planned for his second in command and himself respectively, would both be triumphantly successful.

The immediate cause of the entry of our armies into Afghanistan at the close of 1878 was, it will be remembered, the refusal by the officers of the Amir to permit Sir Neville Chamberlain's mission to proceed beyond Ali Musjid on its way to Cabul. The Amir, Sher Ali Khan, had come down to Umballa in 1869 to meet Lord Mayo, the Viceroy of India. The meeting passed off successfully, but Sher Ali did not obtain all that he hoped for. His attitude towards England from that time became gradually estranged, and by the end of 1876, our relations with Afghanistan had, for practical purposes, become almost non-existent. This fact, together with the growing frequency of communications between Russia and Afghanistan, and the steady advance of Russia towards the Afghan frontier, convinced the British Government that we might ere long become involved in dangerous difficulties, unless early steps were taken to improve our relations with the Amir, and to secure the regular supply of trustworthy information of the progress of events within his dominions and beyond his frontier. "The critical state of affairs in Central Asia demands a statesman," wrote the Prime Minister, Mr Disraeli, to Lord Lytton, in offering him the Viceroyalty. On arrival in India, one of the first tasks to which Lord Lytton applied himself was to induce the Amir to receive a mission at Cabul for the purpose

of negotiating the establishment within Afghanistan of a British representative of the Government of India. Many attempts were made to accomplish this purpose, the chief of which was the prolonged conference at Peshawur in February and March 1877, between Sir Lewis Pelly on behalf of the Indian Government, and Syud Nur Mahomed, the special envoy from the Amir. The conference proved fruitless. By a letter, dated 3rd March, to Sir Lewis, Lord Lytton authorised the closure of the negotiations.

"It would appear from the whole tone of the Envoy's language . . . . that His Highness the Amir now no longer desires our alliance and protection."[1]

Subsequently the Viceroy wrote in an official Minute:

"The Amir, throughout the whole course of the conference, displayed and continued to manifest . . . . a marked hostility towards the British Government. Whilst his representative was carrying on friendly negotiations with the British Envoy at Peshawur, the Amir himself was publicly and falsely informing his subjects that the British Government had broken its engagement, and threatened the independence of his kingdom. . . . ."

"It subsequently became known to the Viceroy that Sher Ali would never have acquiesced in our proposals even had he made a temporary pretence of accepting them, for he was already too far committed to the Russian alliance. . . . ."

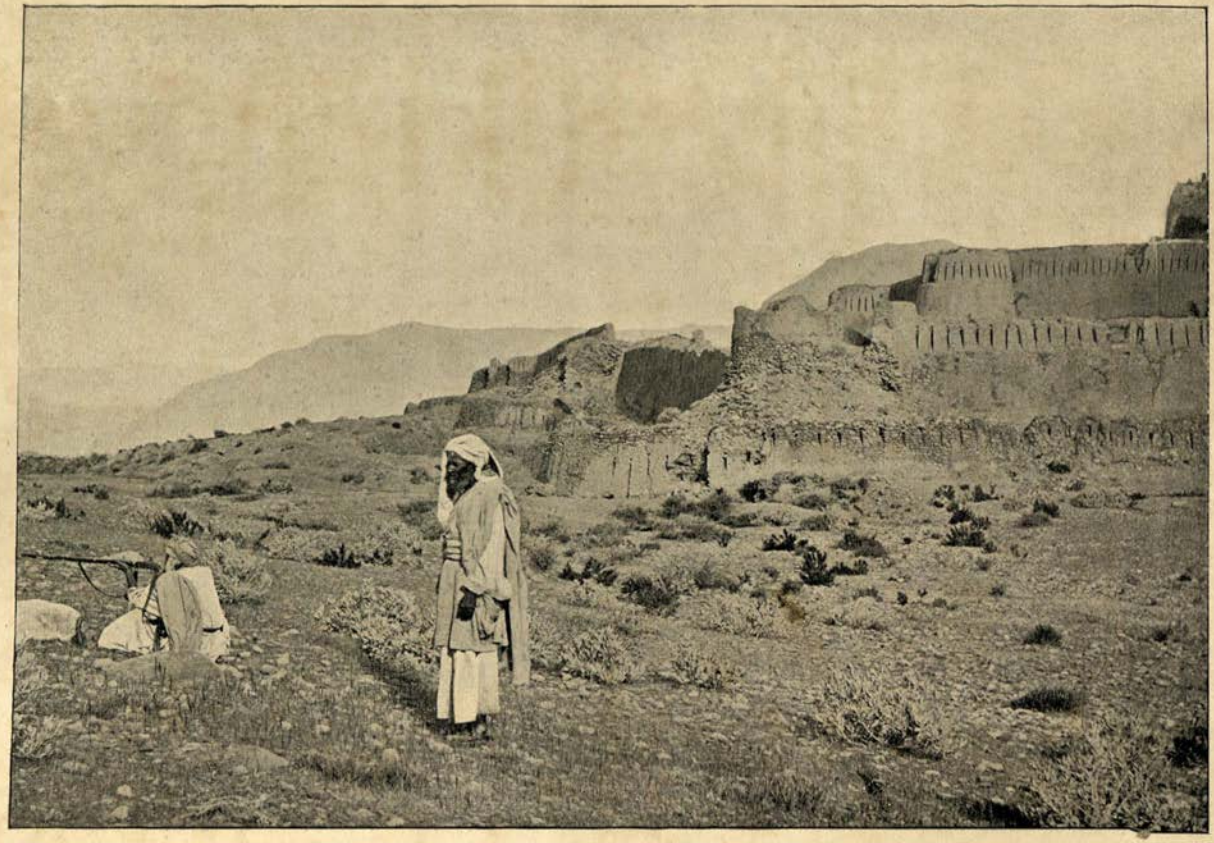
[1] A Frontier official of great experience, at an interview with Lord Lytton in England, before the latter started for India as Viceroy elect, said to his lordship: "Yes, sir, it is most desirable that we should have English agents at Cabul, Candahar, and Herat, and most reasonable to expect the Amir to agree to that—but he is not reasonable, and he won't agree, and if you press it there must be war."

Thus the "negotiations had broken down upon the essential point." "Her Majesty's Government had authorised Lord Lytton to conclude a treaty with the Amir, guaranteeing the integrity of his dominions, but stipulating that for the effective performance of this guarantee, the Amir should permit British agents to have undisputed access to frontier positions upon the north-west border of Afghanistan. This was therefore necessarily insisted upon . . . . as the preliminary basis, and when the Afghan Envoy declined to admit it, the proceedings inevitably came to an end. . . ."

"All communications with the Amir of Cabul having ceased with the termination of the Peshawur conference . . . . there followed an interval of suspense and inaction on the Afghan frontier. But in April 1877 war broke out between Russia and Turkey, and in January 1878 the Russian army had passed the Balkans and encamped before Constantinople, whereupon the English Government had made overt preparations for armed intervention, and a body of Indian troops had been summoned to Malta. The reverberation of these great events had been felt throughout Asia, for the Russians had taken measures to counteract English intervention in Europe by moving troops towards the Afghan frontier, and by sending a mission to the Amir."

Later in the year, when the presence of a Russian mission in the city of Cabul had become a well-ascertained fact, Lord Lytton, writing on the 3rd August to the Secretary of State for India, said:

"The present most injudicious action of Russia fortunately affords us a convenient opportunity for



Old Fort of Jamrud, near Peshawur. [*To face p.* 211.

making, without loss of dignity, ... another, and as I conceive it to be, a last attempt to establish more satisfactory relations with the present Amir. I propose, therefore, in accordance with your sanction, to send a British Mission to Cabul as soon as it can be properly organised. . . . . Much will depend on the man selected as our Envoy. I am still considering the selection, but at present I am strongly inclined to choose Sir Neville Chamberlain. . . . . Sir Neville is an able, resolute man, of exceptional experience in all frontier matters. He is personally acquainted with the Amir. . . . . He is thoroughly familiar with native character, and has had long intercourse with Afghans and Pathans of all kinds. He is a man of striking presence and address. . . . . He has been to Cabul before; he knows the country well; his military experience and ability would be invaluable. . . . ."

So the Chamberlain-Cavagnari mission was forthwith constituted. Sir Neville, who was at that time Commander-in-Chief at Madras, was summoned to Simla, whence, after receiving his instructions from the Viceroy, he started with Major Cavagnari for the frontier early in September, and arrived at Peshawur on the 12th. All possible steps to secure the assent of the Amir to the advance of the mission were taken, but without success. General Chamberlain did not go beyond Jamrud, on the border of the Peshawur district. On the 21st September Major Cavagnari and Colonel Jenkins (who commanded the Military escort) proceeded to a spot within a mile of Ali Musjid,[1] but were obliged to turn back on being courteously but very firmly informed by the Amir's principal officer in the Pass that the further progress of the mission would be opposed by force. The advance party at once rejoined the camp at Jamrud. The mission returned

[1] In the Khyber Pass.

to Peshawur, and was then formally dissolved. Later in the year an ultimatum was sent to the Amir. On the 21st November—the last day of grace allowed by the Home Government—we find the Viceroy writing to the Secretary of State:

"As the Amir has not condescended to make any reply at all to our ultimatum, orders were issued to the Generals commanding the Khyber, Kuram, and Quetta columns to cross the frontier and advance at daybreak this morning."

General Stewart was spending his leave at Exmouth in Devonshire when a summons of recall to India reached him. He began his outward journey on the 24th September—*i.e.* three days after the return of the British mission from Ali Musjid—in full expectation, apparently, of being employed on field service, but in ignorance of the precise position he was likely to hold. Progress is reported to his wife from time to time.

From General Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

S.S. TEHERAN, *11th October* 1878.

. . . . . We are getting over the voyage capitally, and it is now comparatively cool and smooth into the bargain. We hope to be in Bombay on the 16th, and as I have nothing to do I shall leave by the mail train in the evening. I suppose I shall have some sort of orders awaiting my arrival. . . . .

BOMBAY, *16th October* 1878.

We arrived here this morning. . . . I have applications from the whole world for appointments on my staff, and I hardly know what way to turn, so if I don't write very coherently you will know why. . . . .

General Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

SIMLA, *23rd October* 1878.

I suppose you will have heard, long ere this, that I have been selected for the command of the troops that

are to occupy Candahar until the Amir comes to terms. The final orders of the Cabinet have not yet been received, but they are expected to-morrow, and then I am to get final instructions. I am to have chief military and political control in Southern Afghanistan. This is most satisfactory for me, and the way the command was conferred on me without solicitation and while I was still at home is most gratifying to me. I have had a satisfactory interview with the Viceroy, and I believe I thoroughly understand what I have to do. When his plans have been sanctioned at home I will give you a sketch of them. . . . . I dined with the Governor-General, who talked with me the whole evening, and gave me a thorough insight into everything connected with his policy in Afghanistan. What he told me seemed straightforward and consistent. . . . . His story to me is consistent throughout, and, under the circumstances as represented by him, I must say Lord Lytton has done his best, I think, to put our relations with Afghanistan on a proper footing.

General Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

MIAN MIR, *28th Oct.* 1878.

I go off to Mooltan to-day, and am of course in the utmost confusion. I thought I should be moving to Quetta at once, but there is a hitch somewhere at home, and we are waiting now for orders. As far as my Division is concerned, the delay is not of any consequence, for we are not nearly ready. . . . .

MOOLTAN, *31st Oct.*— . . . . There is still delay in the issue of final orders to our force, owing to the desire of the Cabinet at home to give the Amir a further chance of expressing his regret. It is a very fatal policy, as the Amir is not likely to change his mind now, and will think we are afraid of him and his bottle-holders, the Russians. I came down here yesterday, and am staying with Cordery, the Commissioner. Norman[1] I left behind to settle my

[1] His son and A.D.C., Captain Norman Stewart, now Major-General Sir Norman Stewart, C.B.

affairs and bring on things I left behind in my hurry. I forgot even my camp-table and looking-glass. It is very hard to get everything required into the weight allowed by Government, but if the General can't get an extra mule, I think it will be odd. . . . . I hope you won't be expecting very interesting letters just now, as I have positively no time. If you knew what the organisation of a force of this sort requires in all departments you would pity me. I have to decide on a thousand things at once. Every department wants orders and instructions, and there is little time for consideration. My position is one of great delicacy and no little difficulty. The Viceroy and Commander-in-Chief don't agree as to the number of the troops required for the expedition. I think the force provided by the Government will be sufficient for the work cut out for us. If anything more is required more troops will be needed, and the Commander-in-Chief thinks these should be ready now. This is a question which involves many considerations, but as matters now stand, we are strong enough already to do well what we are intended to do. I think a poor Government, like that of India, must be content with knowing that she can add to her strength when the necessity arises, or when it is clearly seen that the necessity is likely to arise. The Government here has not the smallest intention of occupying Afghanistan or interfering with the administration of the country; all it wants is that the ruler of Afghanistan shall not make friends with people who can damage us, and we hope the temporary occupation of certain parts of the country will have the effect of bringing about this arrangement. . . . ."

General Stewart's life and work in his camp at Mooltan, and during his march to Candahar, can, fortunately for our present purpose, viz. that of dealing with the man rather than with events, be sufficiently described by his letters to his wife in England and to his daughter, Mrs Davies (who was

at that time in Simla) and to his friend, General Peter Lumsden, the Adjutant-General of the army in India. These letters appear to give an admirable insight into Stewart's way of working. They show his fearlessness of responsibility, his mastery of and unwearied attention to detail, his great and generous common-sense, his knowledge of men, and his steady courage in dealing with every difficulty, as it arose, in the manner he judged to be right. Moreover, they bring out delightfully the abiding gaiety of Stewart's nature, and give many examples of his keen sense of fun and humour. Meanwhile the perusal of the following graphic narrative[1] of the march to Candahar by Captain Hoskyns, R.E., will make the letters easily understood.

"General Biddulph had . . . . hurried on to Quetta, to take command of the Quetta force already concentrating there, and on the 20th November crossed the frontier without opposition. General Stewart was in the meanwhile concentrating his division at Mooltan preparatory to his march of 400 miles to Candahar. . . . . in the dead of winter, and through a comparative desert. Naturally enough, in England this march, because there was no fight at the end of it, received scant notice; yet during the first phase of the war it was the chief military incident. The fight at Ali Musjid, and the advance to Jelalabad; the advance to Kuram, and the hazardous fight on the Peiwar, neither can be compared in difficulty to this march. The Prussians noticed it; but the English public, who know but little of military matters, and who place a man who wins an ordinary skirmish on an absurd pinnacle of fame, took but scant notice of the General who marched an army rapidly for hundreds of miles through bitter cold and

[1] Found amongst Sir Donald Stewart's papers.

dismal waste, and, through his rapidity of movement alone, paralysed the enemy and won his goal without a fight.

"In November the division proceeded to Sukkur by the Indus Valley Railway, which, through the energy and foresight of the Public Works Member of Council, had just been completed at this opportune moment; and thence, in the latter days of November, commenced its arduous march to Candahar.

"The country from Sukkur to Candahar can best be described as a melancholy waste, intersected by the Suleiman and Khojak ranges of mountains, and inhabited by a sparse population. As far as Dadur it is a dead flat, and beyond Jacobabad there is a desert 23 miles in width, without a drop of water or a blade of grass.

"Dadur is a miserable tumble-down place, and is at the foot of the Bolan Pass. From here the Candahar road leads for 60 miles through the Pass—a gradual ascent, the summit of which is reached some 20 miles from Quetta at an altitude of some 6000 feet.

"In winter there is not a blade of grass or a mouthful of food for man or beast for the whole of this 60 mile defile. The track in one march crosses the river fourteen times. There is nothing the weary traveller can see but the bare hill on either side, and the detestable shingle at his feet. The Pass narrows as it reaches the summit, and the incline increases, the shingle becoming deeper and more fatiguing.

"Quetta, after the weary pilgrimage from Sukkur, appears a very Garden of Eden. It is but a small oasis, after all, green, well watered, with a few trees dotted about, but desperately cold in winter, the thermometer going down to zero. The Candahar road now leads through the Peshin Valley, a valley which can scarcely feed a single cavalry regiment, in which for three or four marches the troops drank brackish water; and which is almost entirely deserted by man or beast during the winter months. This for 60 miles, until the base of the Khojak range is reached.

"The ascent from the east is easy, the descent into the Candahar Plain most precipitous. From the top of the

Khojak Pass you see the Candahar waste in front of you, bounded on your left by the far-reaching Seistan desert, whose red sands billow until lost in the distant horizon. To your front and to your right this stony waste is intersected by Doré-like looking hills, fantastic and weird, as if high seas of molten rock had surged through the plain and been suddenly arrested, and this for 70 miles, until, from a hill overlooking Candahar, your eye at last rests on a smiling valley some miles in extent, with embattled Candahar nestling in its midst. Such was the country through which the General had to march some 14,000 men, including followers, and 7000 camels. I have not time to give any details of the march. The hardships commenced in the Bolan, where the camels died in hundreds, and the bullocks dragging the heavy batteries had their feet actually torn off, the escort finally manning the heavy guns and dragging them up the pass. By the end of December the two divisions had concentrated at the foot of the Khojak. A road and gun-slide were then prepared by the engineers.

"On the 4th January 1879, the Cavalry Brigade, under General Palliser, met a small body of the enemy at Tukht-i-Pul, 30 miles from Candahar, and on the 8th General Stewart entered Candahar, and encamped on the north-east of the town. The goal had been won almost without a blow; rapidity of movement had been a more deadly weapon than the breech-loader.

"Four hundred miles had been covered in six weeks. The intense cold, the want of forage and clothing, had killed the camels with frightful rapidity. The cold and dearth of supplies were far more deadly enemies to the General than the Afghan; the divisions threatened to be no longer divisions in consequence of loss of mobility, and the General saw that any delay would be fatal to him. He could not afford to give rest to the weary animals, and therefore pushed on day after day. Much has been talked about the loss of camels in this campaign, but if a Government insists on declaring war in the dead of winter, and on despatching an army over mountainous ranges and desolate

wastes with cold and famine staring them in the face, can they expect aught else? General Stewart carried out their orders to the letter. He took Candahar at the expense of some thousands of camels. Some Generals would never have got there that winter."

Bearing in mind the preceding general view of the advance of the army to Candahar, we now turn back, as it were, and gather further details from letters written at the time.

General Stewart to General Peter Lumsden.

MOOLTAN, *6th Nov.* 1878.

MY DEAR LUMSDEN,— . . . . We are all ready here except in the matter of followers' clothing. . . . . The Commissariat are doing their work right well on the whole, and I have no fear about supplies or carriage. If we could get 5000 or 6000 hill camels we should be very complete, but I am afraid we shall lose many of the plains-animals when we begin to work them in the hills. There is also a want of suitable forage for them. I am told the shrubs on which the hill camels thrive kill those of the plains, but I hope this is not the case. . . . .—Yours ever, D. M. STEWART.

General Stewart to General Lumsden.

MOOLTAN, *9th Nov.* 1878.

I have received your telegram about the spread of news, and shall carry out the Chief's orders regarding correspondents, and, when the field telegraph is at work, all messages shall be checked.

Meanwhile I must explain, in regard to what has appeared in the *Bombay Gazette*, that the news regarding the occupation of Sibi could not have been furnished by any one in my command, for the very good reason that I knew nothing of it myself till the subject was casually mentioned in a telegram of Sandeman's.[1] . . . . You may notice that

[1] The Governor-General's agent in Beloochistan, afterwards Sir Robert Sandeman, K.C.S.I.

there are no telegrams, or letters in the newspapers about this Division. It will be impossible to keep from the public movements actually going on towards Quetta, but you may rely on it that, once we begin to move from that place, any news likely to be of use to the opposite side won't be conveyed by telegraph, and officers shall be directed not to publish any movements or refer to them in their private correspondence. No correspondents have turned up here yet. We are getting on very well on the whole, but I should like to keep moving, as long halts bring fever among the troops and followers. At the same time, I know that there is not the smallest use in going on till *everything* is ready. Quetta is safe enough now, and I don't want to collect a big force there until there is a certainty of its being in a position to move straight on Candahar.

I think it would be a good plan if all departmental followers were carefully examined by a medical officer before they are allowed to start from the stations where they are entertained, and it might be well if some staff officer were directed to find out from the men themselves—before putting them into trains—whether they are quite willing to serve.

Many of the men sent to me have been pressed, and bolted on the first opportunity, after coming all the way from Meerut at some considerable expense. The medical examination should be a real one. I am told that the men sent to me were reported to be physically fit when entertained, but the doctors here rejected many—though not so many as I should like. I have seen every man connected with the Regimental Establishment, and the Deputy Surgeon-General has gone over every one of them with the Regimental Surgeons. . . . .

General Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

MOOLTAN, 13*th Nov.* 1878.

. . . My instructions have at length arrived, and I am to push on as soon as I am ready to Candahar. Biddulph, who is under me, will go into the Peshin Valley after the

20th, as soon as he is ready to move. I am only waiting here till I am satisfied that everything is in train, and I shall move on towards the end of this week towards Quetta. . . . . I do hope the whole thing will not terminate in smoke. At present there is no indication of the Amir giving way, but I feel quite sure the Russians will advise him to do so, and it would, no doubt, be the best thing for him to do, as he could always intrigue against us at his leisure, following the example set by his Russian friends, who have no scruples of any sort in their diplomatic dealings. As a mere personal question, no man has ever had a better opportunity of distinguishing himself than I have. The means placed at my disposal are ample, and if the Commissariat does not break down, our operations ought to be successful. You will not see much about our movements, as I do not encourage correspondents, but I shall be obliged to have them eventually, and I suppose you will then hear of us. The work that falls on the other columns is mere child's play to ours. Both the Peshawur and Kuram columns are within a few miles of their supplies, while mine have to be carried over 200 miles by routes almost destitute of water, and in many places without grass or firewood. It requires 30,000 camels to keep up any supplies, so you may imagine the magnitude of the Commissariat operations. Hills[1] and Chapman[2] are very cheery, and working away with great good-will. . . . .

General Stewart to General Lumsden.

MOOLTAN, 15*th Nov.* 1878.

We are off on Sunday for Sukkur, from whence my camp will push on to Jacobabad, where I can join it by dawk.[3] . . . .

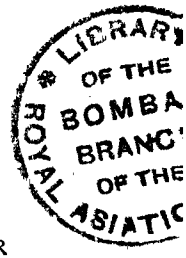
[1] The Assistant Adjutant-General of the force, now General Sir James Hills-Johnes, V.C., G.C.B.

[2] The Assistant Quarter-Master-General, now General Chapman, C.B., lately commanding in Scotland.

[3] By post carriage.

Map to illustrate General Stewart's Marches in Afghanistan.

[*To face p.* 220.



CHAPTER XV

FROM MOOLTAN TO CANDAHAR

General Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

SUKKUR, 18*th Nov.* 1878.

WE arrived here this morning *en route* to Quetta, and I am to get everything regarding the transport train ready, so that we may begin our march at once.

This place looks very much like what it used when I was quartered here thirty-five years ago; the same tumble-down, desolate-looking mud-houses, and not a blade of grass to be seen anywhere. Fortunately Colonel Wallace, the Collector, has come over here to meet me, and has given us shelter for the day. . . . . We must now give up all civilised luxuries, such as white linen, shaving, etc. I have stuck to my shirts and collars, and have shaved myself until now, but I must give up the former at once, and very soon have to give up shaving.

19*th.*—To-morrow is to be the day of fate for us. I shall be at Shikarpore, and on the line of telegraph, and I shall be disgusted if I don't hear something *pukka* some way or the other. It will be more than a fiasco if there is no war after all. Personally, I don't want war, though I shall lose a chance that falls to the lot of a very few. I am not indifferent to the distinction that follows success; still war is in itself a very great evil, and no one who has seen the miseries it brings on innocent people can wish to see it a second time. On this occasion I am, however, of opinion, that war would now be better for the country

and for Afghanistan than a patched-up peace, which would only last till Russia finds our hands full elsewhere. She can always lead us into a quarrel indirectly, and it would therefore be better for both countries that we should try our strength and come to something like a final settlement. If the matter is left in the Viceroy's hands, nothing short of complete submission will satisfy him, and I don't think the Amir will knuckle down so completely after insulting our Envoy. To-day we made our first march from Sukkur towards Quetta. . . . . Having only one servant besides syces, we don't get on very rapidly; fortunately, the men of the 60th Rifles, who form my escort, pitch all our tents for us, and do it very smartly, and my only complaint is that they tear at everything as if it were indestructible, and sometimes pull things to pieces; however, they are good, willing fellows, and very anxious for a spree. My tent is a small Swiss cottage, and very hot in the daytime and cold at night. I dodge the latter, though, by keeping a second coat handy, and whenever I feel in the least chilly I put it on over the other. I have not taken any wine for some time, and I think I should give up spirits too if I were quite sure of the water. I hardly had any sleep last night. I was awoke by a telegram at about one, and by a second about three, and after that the people in the camp began moving about. Horses broke loose, and altogether I had a bad night of it. I shall take care that these noises don't recur, and as there is no telegraphic office here I can't be bothered by telegrams. . . . .

At this point it is necessary to note the progress of events on the North-West frontier. No reply having been received from the Amir to the British ultimatum, the Khyber column, commanded by General Sir Sam Browne, entered the Pass on the 21st November, and attacked the fort of Ali Musjid, which for some hours maintained a vigorous fire. The position, however, having been turned during the night, the garrison precipitately

fled, with loss of guns, stores, and equipage, and Sir Sam Browne marched on Dacca, without encountering further resistance. This post he held for several weeks unmolested, until in December, on grounds of convenience, he advanced to Jelalabad, still encountering no opposition. Simultaneously with General Browne's advance, General Roberts led his division into the lower Kuram Valley, and subsequently to Kuram, the Head Quarters of the district. No opposition was offered to his progress, and the people of the country were found willing to furnish supplies. Continuing his advance into the upper Kuram Valley, General Roberts found an Afghan force established in a position of great strength on the Peiwar Kotal, a ridge which commands the valley on one side of it, and on the other the road towards the Shutargardan Pass. The engagement which ensued, one of the most brilliant that Roberts has ever fought, left him a complete master of this line of advance. The enemy's position, impregnable to a frontal attack, was turned by a night march; the broken Afghan regiments fled across the Shutargardan with loss of all their guns, and the victorious General reached and secured the limit prescribed for the advance of his column without further resistance.

General Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

CAMP, KILLA ABDOOLLA, *23rd November* 1878.

. . . I have little news to give you, as we are still hard at work in the passes and waiting till the rear division comes up. There has been an apparent check in our movements, but it could not be helped, as the Quetta Division is not quite prepared to move on. No one except the two or

three officers on my staff know, or ever will know, what worries I have to meet at every turn. I don't trouble any one, and all those under me know that they must make the best of things. Once started in this country there is absolutely nothing to be got except grain, firewood, and bhoosa,[1] the two latter in limited quantities. All my horses have to eat bhoosa. They have only tasted grass once or twice since we left Sukkur. I am afraid we shan't have any fighting till we get to Kelat-i-Ghilzai, as there are only a few wretched regiments at Candahar, and I fancy they will bolt the instant we make our appearance. The weather is getting warmer, a sign of approaching snow, I fear. We have had the temperature at 3° below zero, or 35° of frost—still we keep our health. . . . . The halt here is very provoking, but it was inevitable from the first. . . . . The poor camels are dying in hundreds, and we can do nothing for them. If we had waited till everything was ready in the way of warm clothing for the animals, we should have been still at Mooltan. I want to get into Candahar in good order, so that I may be able to push on to Kelat-i-Ghilzai and Ghuzni, which I should like to take this winter.

General Stewart to General Lumsden.

CAMP, CHUTTER, *26th November* 1878.

We arrived here this morning, having been delayed a day at the first march out of Jacobabad, owing to the Commissariat sergeant and the provisions having gone off to the wrong place. He took the wrong route simply because one of his friends in cantonments told him it was the usual camp for troops marching to Dadur. These men look on themselves as civilians; but I don't think he will make the same mistake again. The road hitherto has been capital for the march of all arms; one bit of heavy sand can be turned, and the other is to be laid with date twigs. The water difficulty is the only serious one, and all we can do to meet it is to restrict the strength of convoys to such

[1] Chopped straw.

number as can be properly watered. I am also arranging for casks being placed at the stages when the supply of water is limited.

I think everything is now in fine working order except the transport under the Commissariat. It was a great mistake putting the transport under the Commissariat. Sibley[1] has already more than he can do, simply because he has to think for every one under him. . . . . —— may be a good office man, but in the field he is most obstructive; instead of showing officers how their wants are to be supplied, he invariably shunts them with—"This is not according to rule," and "That is not according to rule." In this way appeals are constantly made to Sibley which ought not to be made at all, if the executive officers would only realise the fact that their chief duty is to remove obstacles instead of raising them. . . . .

The difficulty will be the Pass. At first I am afraid we shall lose a lot of cattle there, but I have ordered every camel and cart to bring a maund[2] of forage from Mithunkote and Sukkur, and when this begins to arrive at Dadur our difficulties will vanish. There is much good grass along the route, and all that is wanted is the means of cutting it and bringing it to the place where it is wanted. Unfortunately, the people of the country, who are few in number, won't do work of this sort, and our own people can't spare the time to cut all there is wanted for daily use as they pass along. . . . .

General Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

CAMP, LEHRI (44 *miles from Dadur*), 28*th Nov.*

. . . I hope you have a good map of Afghanistan, and are following our travels. We have got so far well enough, and I have had few smashes, as yet, but Hills, Chapman, and the mess have a regular stampede[3] every night, and

[1] Colonel Sibley, principal Commissariat officer.

[2] About 82 lbs.

[3] Referring to the stampeding of baggage camels and consequent breakages of property.

sometimes they are a whole day without their things. It is very hard on the servants, as they are so few in number. If it were not for the soldiers of the 60th, I don't know what we should do. They strike and pitch tents for us all and load the camels, so we get on. But the whole country is a desert, and sometimes we have the greatest difficulty in getting a sufficiency of good water. At one place where we had to halt owing to the Commissariat going wrong, a great many of us were ill from the water, which was taken from a stagnant pool. It was boiled and filtered, and even mixed with whisky it was only just drinkable. I had one or two twists, but it did not make me ill, fortunately. We are getting over the ground very well, but to-morrow is a sneezer of 28 miles, some call it 31. To the Cavalry officers it is not much, but to those who walk it is no joke. . . . . The heat is great in the daytime, nearly 90° in my tent during the afternoon, and down to 40° in the night. It is now warmer than it was a fortnight ago, but we will shortly be in hideous cold. We reach Dadur the day after to-morrow, and if our camel men don't slip through our fingers we shall be in the Pass the following day. The camel men dread the Pass, as the winter storms may be expected any day, and in these storms men and camels will probably perish. I am hustling the troops to try and get them all through before the snow falls. As there was an unusually heavy fall of rain this year we may look for a mild winter. Our mess party increases every day, and Molloy, the manager, is at his wits' end for tables and chairs. Half of the lot have been completely smashed, and I am lucky in having a chair which cannot be broken. It has gone through many campaigns, and, if it stands the march to Quetta, it will go through Afghanistan easily enough.

30th.

Yesterday we came 28 miles, and our tents did not get up till sunset. . . . . It was very severe on every one, especially the sixty officers who walked the whole way in a hot sun. To add to our miseries we had no baths yesterday, and as my things have not come up till dinner-time

for two days, I have begun to grow a beard ; every one in camp has given up razors except myself and Dr Smith, my chief medical officer—a great swell in his way, and very good-looking. He and I are the only two in camp who have white collars. I shall only grow an Imperial, as I must keep cheeks clean under all circumstances. Just as I was leaving camp this morning, I was informed my new horse had colic. Fortunately, there was a salutri[1] in camp. I got him a dose, and now he seems all right, but I must try and get him gram regularly, as it was a feed of hard barley that disagreed with him. It would be very disgusting if anything were to happen to him just now. . . . . The Candaharis are at last collecting supplies, and have stopped kafilahs[2] coming down by the Bolan, so we may have a fight for the city yet. I daresay they will dispute the passage of the Khojak, but I shall know this soon, as I have directed Biddulph to reconnoitre the passes. His force is now in Peshin, and has seized a lot of the Amir's grain and revenue. But there will be no use in giving you news, as the papers will inundate you all with news of every sort, and mine will be stale indeed by the time it reaches you. I am not even sure that my letters will reach their destination, as the post-master sends them up and down country indiscriminately. Those of Jacobabad were put into the Quetta bag, and those for Quetta are put in the Jacobabad bag occasionally. I suppose it will all come right in the end. Norman has had no return of fever, and is growing a beard like his neighbours. They all look a dirty lot, except Captain Farmer, to whom a beard is an improvement. Our mess contains twenty members, and it is really wonderful how the three men in the kitchen do work for us all. The food is, of course, very plain, but it is always wholesome and fairly well cooked. I know I have not enjoyed my food for many years as I am doing now. I feel as strong as a horse, and never have any aches of any sort. We are now at the mouth of the Bolan, and it is

[1] Native horse-doctor.

[2] Strings of laden camels.

quite a treat to get clear pure water. The Bolan stream runs past our camp. . . . .

General Stewart to General Lumsden.

CAMP, DADUR, *1st Dec.* 1878.

I have halted here to rest my camp and make arrangements for march of the division through the Pass. Much has to be done, as the troops and convoys, which have gone ahead, have not obeyed orders nor made any arrangement for the conservancy of the camping grounds. I have entered into an agreement with the people in the Pass to keep it clean as regards dead animals and sweeping, and I will lay down rules for conservancy, etc., so that the troops passing through cannot well go wrong if they use ordinary diligence. There is much also to be done about forage and firewood. . . . .

General Stewart to General Lumsden.

CAMP, BIBINANI, BOLAN, *4th Dec.* 1878.

So far, the Pass will be no trouble to anything except the guns and Commissariat officers, who will not find it easy to provide forage in it. I have left a Sapper company to improve the road where it is very bad, but I daresay I shall have to ease the batteries by giving them a few camels to assist in carrying the ammunition.

I have just heard from Biddulph that he has left 550 sick at Quetta, and as this is an entire regiment, I am wiring to ask that the 2nd Sikhs may be given to fill up his vacancies. . . . .

The Native regiments are far too weak in rank and file to enter a campaign with, and I think we should have some system of volunteering in the army whereby corps going into the field could be made up to any strength. . . . . Major Laurie of the 34th Foot is a passed man, and is certainly a good, zealous officer, who knows his work. He is a capital rider, and distinguished himself in the Crimea, where he was wounded. I think you would find him as good as most people, if you could give him a place. A

volunteer is always worth two pressed men, and he is burning for employment. If you will think of him when you want Staff, I should say you will get a good man.

General Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

CAMP, MECH, BOLAN PASS, 5*th Dec.* 1878.

As our camels are a long way behind, and there is no chance of getting into a tent till late in the day, I shall try and scribble a few lines on my knee, seated on a *soft* stone. We had our breakfast half-way for the first time, but I don't know that I like the plan, as we have a long time to wait for dinner. I got your last letter of the 1st Nov., two days ago, and just after I had sent off my last. It is rather amusing reading your surmises as to our movements, and recommending stores and plenty of warm things!! My baggage is under 200 lbs., so you can fancy how luxurious I am. Compared with others I am very well off, but I think Government has been hard on officers and men in the matter of baggage. They have not enough for the preservation of health in the extreme cold to which they will shortly be subjected. I have not as yet begun to use my real warm kit, but I wear every morning a banian,[1] then a flannel shirt, then a cardigan, and over that a serge patrol-jacket, and over all my uniform greatcoat. I have still in reserve a thick cloth jacket and a long poshteen[2] down to my heels, besides my ulster. My gloves are about my weakest point; those you sent me more than a year ago have come in famously, and if you sent me another pair by post I should not mind, but I fear we shall be in a warm climate before I can get them. I hope to be on the Khojak before this day month and near Candahar, and by that time Candahar will be pleasant enough. . . . . The Viceroy sends me telegrams of news every day, but it is strange that we can get nothing out of Bobs; he was to have attacked the Peiwar Pass some days

[1] Warm under-vest.

[2] Afghan sheepskin coat.

ago, and I cannot make out why we don't hear. I hope he has made a good job of it. The troops will have a rough time of it coming along here, but I have shortened the marches as much as possible and given them every assistance, so that I hope they will arrive in good order and without any regular breakdown. I have an account of the march of the army along this road in 1839, and the contrast between what was done then and what we are doing now is very extraordinary. In one day's march fifty or sixty horses died of fatigue and thirst in 1839 in one Brigade; as far as I know, we have not lost one horse yet in the whole Division. The sacrifice of life among the followers too was appalling, but one cannot wonder, when women and children were allowed to accompany the army as in an ordinary march in the provinces. Some of my troops have reached Dadur, and will be in the Pass to-morrow, so we shall be moving towards the Khojak in a fortnight, or as soon as I can get the 15th Hussars, two or three batteries of Artillery, and two or three Infantry regiments. . . . . My memory is becoming very treacherous about matters that are occurring about me daily, but I can recollect things that took place years ago very vividly; signs of old age. A telegram has just come in from the Viceroy reporting that Bobs has had a great success at the Peiwar Kotal, a strong hill in the Kuram Valley. He has taken fifteen guns and the whole of the enemy's position; his loss has not been great, though two officers have been killed. . . . .

QUETTA, *8th Dec.*

We came in here this morning, and I never saw a more barren country. It is simply a desert, and the cold is very great. This morning in camp it was down to 10°, *i.e.* 22° of frost. I thought I should have been able to do a little letter-writing to-day, as I halted at Quetta for purposes of business, but I have had so much to do in putting this filthy spot into decent order, and other matters, that I have little time for my private correspondence, so must now wind up.

General Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

CAMP, KILLA ABDOOLLA (*near the Khojak Pass*),
15*th Dec.* 1878.

I arrived here yesterday, and am now with the Head Quarters of Biddulph's Division, of which I have assumed command. . . . . The duty I have undertaken is far heavier than I thought it would be, and things have not turned out quite as I expected. The people, though willing enough to make money out of us, do not quite see their way to coming into our service for a temporary purpose. If we could promise to remain in the country, I think they would do much more for us, but they naturally look to the time when we shall have disappeared, and when their own rulers have come into power. The troops are hard at work making the road over the Khojak practicable for guns, and as soon as my Division arrives we shall push on to Candahar. The weather is frightfully cold, and I am now at my last resource. I put on everything that I had on my bed last night, and was pretty warm, but the weight was awful. . . . . My moustaches freeze at night. Last night the thermometer went down to 9°, and now, a little after sundown, it is 42° in my tent; how the natives stand the cold I know not. I wish we were across the hills, and in a warmer climate on the other side. . . . . The wind is blowing into my tent in a disagreeable way, and the thermometer inside is just 32°. Since I began this letter the thermometer has fallen 10°, and the ink is freezing in my pen. I never thought I should be placed in such circumstances as I am now. Of course, I knew it would be cold; but one does not realise what it is to sleep in a temperature of 23° or 24° of frost until one has actually tried it. One of our post sowars[1] was murdered in the Bolan the day before yesterday, and the mail carried off. I don't know yet whether it was the up or down mail, but either way, it is very aggravating. . . . .

[1] Mounted letter-carriers.

General Stewart to General Lumsden.

CAMP, KILLA ABDOOLLA, 16*th December* 1878.

. . . . . I have had to notice these things in a mild way, still I cannot do so without hurting somebody's feelings. However, as I am responsible, I mean to work things my own way, and all I want you to do is to let me keep my present Staff. They are doing well, and I should be sorry to see them superseded by any one. . . . . We expected the people of the country to assist us, and they are doing so, so far as supplies are concerned; but they do not care to take service till they know whether we intend to keep the country or not. I think we should hold on to Peshin. The Khojak range would be a capital frontier. . . . .

I cannot give you as much information about the force as I could wish, simply because I have not the time. . . . . I think we shall get over the Khojak yet with the whole force before the snow falls. If caught in the snow, I suspect we shall lose no end of animals.

General Stewart to General Lumsden.

CAMP, KILLA ABDOOLLA, 22*nd Dec.* 1878.

. . . . . We are halted here because we have no money and our transport is in pieces—due, no doubt, to scarcity of forage and cold. . . . . Many of the poor brutes were unfit for the hard work of knocking about Peshin, and have died of exhaustion. Fortunately, we have no end of grain, so the horses and natives can be fed, and our only difficulty will be European supplies. . . . .

General Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

CAMP, GULISTAN KUREZE, 29*th Dec.* 1878.

. . . . . We are all very well in this glorious weather, which is favouring us in every way. Indeed, if we had a shower of rain, not a man could be moved, the soil is so slippery. If it holds up for three days more we shall be on the other side of the Khojak, and on our way to Candahar. We have been so long humbugging here that I am sick

of the place. The regiments of my Division are now arriving, and I hope there will be no further hitch. The siege train I have given up as hopeless for the next two months, but if I can get on the two elephant batteries, I hope to be in a position to take Ghuzni as well as Kelat-i-Ghilzai before the spring. The cold has been, and is still, intense, and I often wake up at night from this cause. Still we enjoy the best health, and we eat like troopers. Yesterday I went across the Gwaja Pass to see the works, a ride of 30 miles on one horse. We pulled up at the top of the Pass, and Sandeman gave us lunch. It was brought out on camels, who trotted on with us. . . . . It was as well got up as any picnic lunch I have ever seen, and how it was all carried in the saddlebags was a puzzle to me.[1] Some of the troops now arriving have had a rough time of it. Men and officers have been employed in hauling guns through the sand, and the officers have themselves had to put their hands to the ropes and pull. I must say all have shown the best spirit, and I hope they will have some fighting, as that is the thing wanted to make them happy.

30th Dec.

The most of my Division having now arrived, I am going to arrange for a general move forward. We are very short of camels, though, and I expect there will be trouble on that account. Lumsden, writing to me lately, has begged me to push on as fast as I can, because the people at home are pressing the Government to finish the war. However, it would be a great mistake to let matters come to an end before we get into Candahar. In fact, so far as we are concerned here, the effect would be injurious to our interests.

31st Dec.

We marched to the first stage on our way to Candahar, and it is time too, for it is clouding up, and I fear we shall have snow and rain. I am very down on my luck

[1] No doubt the lunch was provided by "Mr Bux," Sir Robert Sandeman's well-known butler.

to-day, owing to the break-down of the Commissariat. . . . . We are now in possession of only ten days' supplies, and we may have to go on half rations if we are snowed up, or anything of that sort. There is another thing that annoys me. I had a letter yesterday from Col. Colley,[1] saying that the Government wished me to push on to Candahar, for political reasons, just as if I were holding back. The troops have had frightful hard work of it pulling the guns along, and they are behaving splendidly, but I do fear the collapse of the Commissariat altogether. My work is not the bed of roses I expected it to be, but the fault lies partly with the Government, which insisted on putting the transport work on a department which was already overweighted with its own work. . . . . I am not very clear about the rights and wrongs of this war, but we could not overlook the rejection of our mission, though whether it was wise to send a mission in the way it was done is quite another question. There does not seem to be much chance of a scrimmage in this part of the world, and I am sorry for it, on account of the troops, who have undergone so much hard work. . . . .

General Stewart to General Lumsden.

CAMP, GWAJA (*the northern outlet of Gwaja Pass*), *1st Jan.* 1879.

We marched over this pass to-day by a splendid road made by Sankey.[2] Were it not for the difficulties connected with the water supply for the next 30 miles, this would unquestionably be the best route for troops. Nevertheless, when the new road, which I have ordered to be made at the Khojak, is open for traffic, it will have some advantages over this, which makes its possession for our purpose a necessity.

I have heard nothing from you or Government about the formation of this force as an Army Corps, and I con-

[1] Private Secretary to the Viceroy, afterwards Sir George Colley, K.C.B.

[2] Col. R. H. Sankey, R.E., Commanding Engineer.

clude that the Chief's proposals have been rejected. While money is being poured out like water it seems a poor economy to make one or two men do the work of four or five. This is all I shall say on the subject.

You will see by my telegrams that a single day was not lost by us, and that the leading brigade of my 1st Division moved bodily across the pass without a halt on arrival from Quetta. The troops are in first-rate condition and health, but the Artillery have simply collapsed, owing to the complete failure of the bullocks. They have died in large numbers, and from sore feet and other causes are hardly able to drag themselves, much less loaded waggons, along even an easy road. D/2 which started to-day at 8 A.M., has not arrived in camp yet, 7 P.M., though it is accompanied by a large escort of Infantry, and the march is all downhill—an excellent road.

It is very hard on the troops, and I have sent off a fatigue party to bring in the battery. I hear some of the other batteries are in a worse plight, and as for the heavy batteries, I don't know when they will arrive, though I have ordered a mortar from each to be left at Quetta, if Arbuthnot[1] thinks it will mend matters.

From what I have seen on this campaign, it is quite evident that our artillery organisation is not what it ought to be, and all commanding officers make the fatal error of saving their horses at the expense of their bullocks, forgetting that a battery which has no mobile reserve is in itself insufficient. At present the most of the troops in this force are simply working parties for the Artillery, and if I had not arranged for this, not one of them would have reached Quetta. . . . .

This is a very serious matter, especially as we cannot get gun bullocks in this country, and unless arrangements are made for sending up large numbers of these animals, we shall have to leave our waggons in the country when we quit it. I will make an official representation about this

[1] Brigadier-General C. G. Arbuthnot, R.A., C.B., commanding Artillery.

matter as soon as I see Arbuthnot, who is still behind. . . . . My idea is that in these days an artillery that is practically tied down to bullocks is simply an encumbrance, and we should have been in Candahar a fortnight ago if the guns could get along like the other branches—and field artillery ought to do this.

HANZ MUDDUT, *4th Jan.*

I was interrupted the other day, and till now have not had an opportunity of going on with this letter. We are getting on very well, though the marches are long and water very scarce. The gun waggons still an encumbrance, and the men are beginning to growl, as they are out all day dragging them. If I had known they were in such a plight I should have left the waggons at Quetta, for as matters stand I am always in dread of being obliged to abandon them. We hear that Mir Afzul[1] has come out to Khorshab and Mundishuhur to meet us. On the map the position looks a good one, but even if he is very much stronger than he is reported to be, we ought to give a good account of him. Palliser[2] is to-day at a place called Saifoodeen, on the banks of the Dorn, about due west from Leela Mujnoon on our maps, and Kennedy with the right column at Niel Mandi.

On the 6th January, at Kushah, with Cavalry ahead, and second Brigades of each Division, General Stewart knew that his success was assured. The entry into Candahar was fixed for noon, but an unlucky accident of a bullock-cart floundering against a dam and breaking it, flooded the road, or perhaps cultivators wishing to save the crops from stragglers, flooded the fields. The route became a swamp. The Cavalry succeeded in getting across by jumping and scrambling, but the guns and Infantry stuck fast.

[1] The Afghan Governor of Candahar.

[2] Col. C. H. Palliser, C.B., B.S.C., commanding Cavalry Brigade.

"After passing over the flooded plain," writes an eye-witness, "we climbed a short, steep rise, blocked with dead camels, and the vale of Candahar lay spread before us. The morning, though brilliant, was hazy, and we saw no more than long mud walls interlacing piles of ruins, skeleton groves of trees, and enormous cliffs beyond, backed by range on range of lofty mountains. Prospect more bleak could not be fancied. Far away, as it seemed through the haze, a large dome glimmered faintly, and two or three minarets could be seen with the glass. Immediately below us the Cavalry Brigades were ranged in solid lines, glittering in the sun. Their camels, closely packed, knelt in the rear, a bristling, serried mass. At a word all sprang to motion, clattering, jangling. The noise of their hoofs sounded to us like the rustling of innumerable birds. We descended to take place behind them, horses and men elate with the excitement of the day, but our triumphal progress was destined to a fall. An officer galloping from rear assured the General that his Infantry were miles behind, toiling through the slough, his guns were entangled, his baggage in a desperate case. The sappers told off had doubtless done their best, but the water was too much for them. . . . . After weary hours the Infantry appeared at length, crowning the slope, and with them A-B battery of Horse Artillery. We went on, stopping from time to time as the guns came to a stand-still. The whole land was covered with ruins, water-courses, fields, and villages, each surrounded by its wall of mud. Of the Candahar woods and orchards, so much talked about, there was no trace other than a copse of little poplars, and a gnarled mulberry here or there beside a stream. Presently the natives began to show, individuals, then groups, then a continuous line. They squatted on walls, crowded the broken buildings, sat on the trees and banks; an ill-looking multitude for the most part, but not dangerous. No one gave a word of greeting or of menace. They sat with curious eyes, and smiles of questionable meaning, to see us file by. General Stewart alone seemed to impress them. This fine old soldier looked every inch

the leader of a conquering host. Taller than all his staff, he rode a handsome Arab at their head, smiling shrewdly under his long white moustache, his keen eyes noting every movement of the crowd.[1] So we advanced to the walls, which are of enormous height and thickness. The gates alone need repair; that by which we entered had great cracks and gaps which almost made one anxious for the multitude assembled on its tower. The programme was to enter by the Shikarpore Gate, traverse one quarter of the town, and emerge into our camping place by that of Cabul. The Shikarpore portal has probably a thickness of 40 feet; half-way through one turns at a right angle. Its actual gates are monstrous balks of timber, faced with iron. Beyond, we reached a street lined with trees, spectators, beggars, and ruins. In little open sheds on either side sat the usual inhabitants of an Eastern bazaar. Life in this poor quarter was not disturbed by late events. The paltry goods were exposed as usual, and vendors of fruit, pastry, butchers' meat, and miscellaneous objects encroached on our path without ceremony. Beyond and above the sheds rose shapeless walls, some covered with broken designs in stucco. It seemed to me that these remains of an older, loftier, and more ornate architecture had been roofed in as they stood. Upon the parapets women reclined in groups, much less closely veiled than in the barbarous villages we had passed through. The elder and poorer of them scarcely pretended to hide their faces, and most of us caught one glimpse at least of fine eyes and well-cut features. The population is much fairer than any we have yet seen. I observed several women, many men and children, considerably whiter than ourselves. At the corner of the wynds or alleys opening on the main street stood ladies of the higher class, securely hidden by black robes. They had evidently escaped by a side door from the large courtyards which we could see."

[1] See also p. 282 *infra*, regarding the impression made on Afghans by General Stewart.

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CHAPTER XVI

IN CANDAHAR AND KELAT-I-GHILZAI.

THE General with his force having thus arrived at Candahar, traversed the city, and passing out by the Cabul Gate, on the opposite side to that by which they had entered, encamped at a little distance from the city walls.

General Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

CAMP, CANDAHAR, *8th Jan.* 1879.

. . . Since the 31st Dec. we have marched 118 miles over a stiff country, and if the weather had not stood our friend, we should have been in a nice hat. You will have seen in the papers that our advanced Cavalry had a scrimmage on the 4th with some of the Amir's sowars. It was a smart little affair, and the enemy's loss probably 100 in killed and wounded, while on our side only seven men were wounded, and of those only two had severe cuts. This is all the fighting my force has seen. The fact is, Mir Afzul had only a couple of regiments at Candahar, and they have all bolted towards Herat. I don't know whether any of the notables of this place will return after a time, but at present there is not a man of note left in the town, and the whole country is left without a Government. I am trying to get hold of a man to put in temporarily, as we can't let things slide into chaos. The difficulty is to know what to do next. I am ordered to take Kelat-i-Ghilzai and Giriskh, which I can easily do in the course of eight or ten days, but what is to be done after that is a puzzle to me. We cannot get to

Ghuzni till spring, and by that time the Government of Afghanistan will have tumbled to pieces. Already we hear the Amir has left Cabul, and there is a report in the city that Yakub[1] has also left for Turkestan. I wonder what you are all doing this afternoon! Less than three months ago I was shooting at Kilcalmkill, little dreaming that I should be in Candahar, or anywhere else in this vile country. You have no idea what a vile, barren country it is. Certainly the hills are fine, and it is not easy to imagine the summer can be hot; but it is the dirt and squalor of the place which disgusts me. The people, too, seem to take no interest in us but to rob us. Prices are awful, and firewood is one of the most expensive luxuries. To-day our mess things came in so late that we had no dinner cooked. I have had nothing since breakfast time except a cup of tea, some sweet biscuits, and two hard-boiled eggs. The rest are in much the same plight, and as my candle is nearly out I must go to bed, as I can't afford a new one. It is the most precious thing I have, and I can't indulge in reading in bed nowadays.

9th.

I am in a difficulty to know what to do with the country now we have got it. I have to arrange for the government of the city and the collection of taxes. This is no easy matter, as most of the officials have disappeared, but it is astonishing how the people accept the change of rulers. Yesterday the postman arrived from Herat, and finding all the officials gone, brought his bag into our camp, and in it we found a letter from the Governor of Herat to the Amir, asking him for money to enable him to send re-inforcements of Cavalry to Candahar, and I have no doubt it was the want of money which prevented these men from coming down here. I shall stay here two or three days to rest and feed the cattle, and shall go on to Kelat-i-Ghilzai. My idea is to take Ghuzni, but they say the road is blocked up at this time of year. . . . .

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[1] Yakub Khan, the eldest surviving son of the Amir Sher Ali.

General Stewart to General Lumsden.

CANDAHAR, *9th Jan.* 1879.

Just as I was writing at Hanz, Palliser and Kennedy were having a scrimmage with the Afghan Horse. It was a very good business on the whole, and the enemy's loss was much greater than represented in my telegram. They admit about forty killed, and many more wounded. However, Mir Afzul bolted the instant his horsemen returned to Candahar. . . . . The troops are disappointed at not having a fight, but are all in fine health and spirits. I am sending Biddulph to Giriskh, and am going myself to Kelat,[1] and I hope the Government will let me go to Ghuzni if I can get there at this time of year. We have had wonderful weather, not a drop of rain. Our difficulty is forage for so many animals, and if we are not to go to Herat, I should like to send some of the force back to India, as there is really nothing to speak of south of Herat and Cabul. We bagged the Governor of Herat's post yesterday, and found that the re-inforcements for Candahar could not be sent down because the Amir had not sent the money asked and promised.

All the great men have bolted from here. But there is one Nur Mahomed, who is said to be *the* great man of the place, and if we can catch him we shall put him in charge of the district. He was the Amir's collector.

The people do not show much excitement, and loot us dreadfully, but since we left Peshin we have not had a follower touched, nor have we lost a pin's worth of baggage. This speaks well for the troops and the people. They make us pay heavily for everything, but this is preferable to making requisitions. Candahar is a filthy place, and the Ark[2] has been gutted of everything in the shape of wood, even to the lintels of the doors and windows. I have no end of things to write about, but my time is so taken up with looking after the Commissariat, that my life is a burden to me. . . . .

[1] Kelat-i-Ghilzai.

[2] The Citadel.

General Stewart to his Daughter, Mrs Davies.

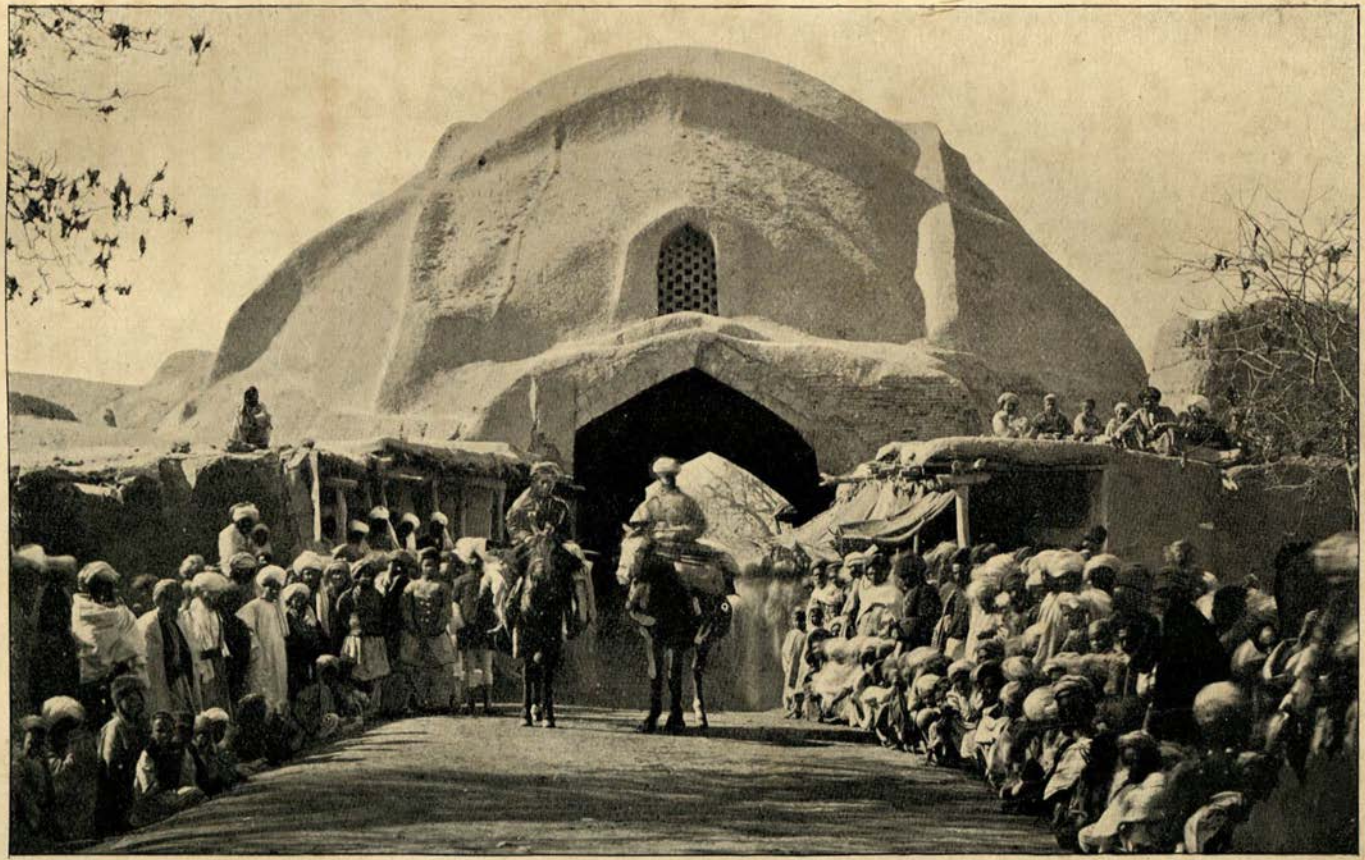
CAMP, CANDAHAR, *12th Jan.* 1879.

You will have seen in the papers that we have made a triumphal entry into Candahar, and that two scoundrels attempted to assassinate St John[1] and Lieutenant Willes of the Artillery on the 10th. There are a lot of Ghazis[2] about the place, but I have told the troops they must look out for themselves, as I am not going to let them bully us, or frighten us into *not* going about the town, or wherever we like. I am off to Kelat in a day or two. Kelat-i-Ghilzai is on the road to Cabul, and Biddulph goes to Giriskh on the Helmund, till we know what Government wants to do with us. The climate is milder here than at Quetta, and I begin to think we shall have no snow or rain this winter. The weather has certainly favoured us in a remarkable manner. . . . .

Captain Hoskyns thus concludes his narrative of the march to Candahar:

"On arriving at Candahar, the Commanding Royal Engineer immediately found his hands full to overflowing —a cantonment had to be built, and various works, such as water-supply, drainage, road-making, commenced. These works proceeded without intermission until July, when the cantonment was finished, and the troops comfortably housed. In consequence of the paucity of timber at Candahar, nearly all the roofs are domed, the villages at a distance looking like beehives. The rapidity and ingenuity with which the Candahar mason builds these domes is most remarkable. They use gypsum, a quick-setting cement, and work independently of centring. Our head native foreman had, odd to relate, built barracks for General Nott some forty years ago. In the Bolan, too, road-making on a large scale was being pushed on, and a detailed survey of the Peshin and Candahar districts was being completed."

[1] The chief political officer, afterwards Sir Oliver St John, K.C.S.I.
[2] Religious fanatics.



Gate of the Bazaar, Candahar. [*To face p.* 242.

General Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

CAMP, CANDAHAR, 13*th Jan.* 1879.

. . . . . To tell you the truth, I don't see much chance of a settlement of affairs here for a long time to come. The Amir has gone to throw himself at the feet of the Czar, and his son, Yakub Khan, is said to have also left Cabul, so there is nobody left to deal with, and the whole country will be in a state of chaos. Here we are getting on tolerably well, and our only difficulty is food, but that is a very serious one. . . . . Having to draw all European supplies for 300 miles and more, through a country which produces little or nothing, is a serious undertaking, and anything that throws it out of gear plays the mischief with us. There is no use in howling, and we all do the best we can, but we have not more than seven days' supplies, and I don't know when any more can reach us. . . . .

General Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

CAMP, 18*th Jan.* 1879.

We are approaching Kelat-i-Ghilzai, and the weather continues propitious, but we must expect snow, and what we shall suffer then I cannot say. I fully expect to lose an immense number of camels, as they are all much weakened from scarcity of food. The horses will, no doubt, suffer too, from the same causes, but as for the men, we can't starve while we have plenty of mutton. It has been rather a risky trip this, as we have only two or three days' supplies in hand, and are living from hand to mouth on what we can pick up. I daresay I shall be blamed, if we come to grief, but it is better to keep moving about and occupying the country than squatting at a place like Candahar, where the troops will suffer from sickness and *ennui*. If I had a month's supplies, or even less, there is nothing in the world to stop my going to Cabul. I could get to Ghuzni in eighteen days from this. If I was sure that stores were coming up behind, I should not mind going there now.

The road is still open, and no snow has fallen yet, but of course we are not out of the wood yet. We are fast getting to the end of the month, and in February we may reasonably be looking for milder weather. I wonder what will be said about our proceedings. We have not had much fighting, but the difficulties are simply astonishing, and no one can conceive what they have been who has not gone through what we have done. The Commissariat has been a great disappointment to me, as I always had a high opinion of its organisation, but I now see that it is not fitted for general service out of India, and the seniors are so wedded to their own ways of doing business, that I have had the greatest difficulty in making them do their work in my way. . . . . It is a great nuisance being so far away from the telegraph, because I really don't know what I am to do after I get to Kelat, unless I return to Candahar. I want to go on either Cabul or Herat ways, but till I know the policy of Government I fear I may be going too fast for the people at home. I know the Government wants to bring the war to a close as soon as possible, but as the Amir has bolted[1] and Yakub has not shown any signs of making terms, I really don't see what is to be done but to go to Cabul. I must say I want to show the Russians that we can go where we like, even in winter time. It is very amusing to see how every one talks of my wintering somewhere on the road. I know I am running great risks here, but nothing useful can be done in this world if risks are not run when there is a necessity for undergoing them. . . . .

I have only got a few more candles left, and when they are finished what am I to do at night? I shall be done out of my little reading in bed. After mess I always scuttle into bed, as it is the only place in which I am comfortably warm. There goes the mess bugle—off to dinner—Irish stew and nothing else. I am getting just a little tired of it. . . . . .

I must now go to bed as my feet are perishing and I have no fire. There is not a stove in camp, and we can't

[1] See p. 251 *infra*.

even get firewood here. There are no trees, and we cook with the twigs of shrubs and dry southernwood picked up on the plains. The country is like a desert, nothing but stones and rocks. They say the Russians don't think much of Cabul, and as most of the country is far more sterile round Cabul than here, I don't wonder at their disgust. . . . . .

19th.

We are getting into the cold regions again, and our camels are dying in large numbers every day; it is sad to see the poor beasts drop down helpless and unable to eat the forage that is within their reach. We hear that there are no troops to speak of between this and Cabul. There are a few hundreds in Kelat and the same number in Ghuzni, but nothing of any consequence. I should like to go on straight, but I can't get orders from the Government, and it will be dull work halting and doing nothing in a miserable country like this. . . . . .

21st Jan.

We are within sight of Kelat-i-Ghilzai to-day, and Fane's Brigade has arrived there this morning. The garrison of five or six hundred men bolted yesterday or the day before, and the troops are disgusted. If they had a fight they would not mind roughing it. Our Cavalry and Artillery horses are half starved, and yet the material is in the country. My troubles are all connected with food, and if the Government does not very shortly tell me what their instructions are, I shall have to decide for myself, and probably do something which may get me into trouble. I want to go to Cabul, but the Viceroy has never hinted at anything of the sort, and in the present state of our transport and supplies it would be a very risky business. A fall of snow would cut us off entirely from our base and source of supplies. . . . . Our plan is of course to induce the people to bring in what they can dispose of, but they are so avaricious that they stick out for exorbitant rates. I have sent for the headmen and told them plainly that, if any one is to starve in this

country, they will have to die first, as I don't mean my men to starve while food exists. They were immensely tickled with this, but they understand my reasoning, and I mean to carry out my threat. . . . . .

General Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

CAMP, KELAT-I-GHILZAI,[1] *25th Jan.* 1879.

. . . I went up to the fort to-day and presented the Order of British India to an old Subadar of the Kelat-i-Ghilzai regiment, who served in this place in the Afghan War of 1839-42. He and another Subadar are the only men left in the regiment who defended this place under Col. Craigie Halkett of the 20th Native Infantry, and it was a piece of great good luck that I was enabled to decorate the old man in the middle of the fort, where his regiment had so gloriously distinguished itself. The old gentleman went over the place with me, and told me the story of the defence in a very intelligent manner, although everything has been changed since he was here last. He pointed out a row of what appeared to be stalls, like stable-stalls, and said: "There all the officers lived! There was one officer in each room and some held two!" The fort outside is a most picturesque-looking structure and contains a wonderful thermal spring of beautiful water, which spouts out of a hillside in the middle of the enclosure. Curiously enough, we found small crabs and frogs with long tails in the spring. Such frogs may be common, but I have never seen frogs with tails before.[2] The weather still holds up, and the people of the country think Providence has specially intervened in

[1] On the 21st May 1842, the 3rd Shah's Infantry, under Captain Craigie Halkett of the 20th Bengal Infantry, repulsed, at this place, the combined Ghilzai assault. The regiment was retained when the Shah's force was broken up, as the Kelat-i-Ghilzai regiment, and as such formed part of the Bengal army—but without a number. After the Mutiny, the regiment was made the 12th Bengal Infantry, which position it still holds.

[2] Young frogs have small tails, which either drop off or are absorbed. (See Cuvier.)

our favour, as there has been no snow to speak of, where in ordinary years it lies from 3 to 5 feet deep. The people say that when travellers attempt to go between this and Ghuzni in winter, they begin to bray like donkeys and then die of cold. Futteh Mahomed[1] made such horrible noises outside my tent last night, that I thought he was braying, and I was quite relieved when he brought in my tea this morning. There is a dreadful wind which rises every night about twelve and blows straight into my tent till noon. It then ceases, and the days are calm till the following midnight. It is this wind which kills all our camels. I turn into bed now in drawers, flannel trousers, two pairs of stockings, a banian, flannel shirt, and cardigan. Then over my bedding I have an enormous poshteen and my ulster, with night-cap. In the daytime I wear all these things with leather waistcoat, shooting coat, ulster and poshteen over all, and outside my boots I have a pair of long numdah[2] boots. Of course I am warm, but not a bit too warm. I have only taken to the leather waistcoat the last two days, and now I am at my last rag. I have nothing else to put on, however cold it may become. . . . . .

General Stewart to General Lumsden.

KELAT-I-GHILZAI, 26*th Jan.* 1879.

I was very glad to get yours of the 1st January, which is the last news I have had from India. . . . .

The people here say they can't fight us, but they don't hesitate to give out that they will worry us in every way they can. I am anxiously looking out for orders, as, if we are not going any further, I would advise the withdrawal of a portion of the force, especially a part of the Artillery, which is unnecessarily strong. The horses have suffered terribly from scarcity of forage. Being unaccustomed to bhoosa, many of them have fallen into bad condition, especially the old horses and walers, and a good number

[1] General Stewart's servant. [2] Felt.

have died from short commons and cold combined. I have never felt such cold. It is sometimes below zero, and constantly down at 8° and 10°, with a cutting wind, which kills the Indian camels like flies. If the poor beasts had been well fed I think few would have given way, but with scanty food and cold combined, they had no chance. . . . .

Ever since we left Peshin we have been living on the country; two small convoys have reached us, and that is all I have heard of. . . . .

It is very awkward being away from a telegraph. I have not seen a paper of later date than the 30th December, and the post-office have now stopped forwarding newspapers of any sort. Whether our letters reach their destination I know not. . . . . I think the snow is coming at last, and for some reasons I wish it would come and have done with it. The uncertainty is always bothering us, and as we are halted, the men can't come to much grief, though I have no doubt we shall lose a great many camels and probably some of the weak horses. We have no news from Cabul, and the Ghuzni people are writing to their friends here for information from Cabul.

General Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

KELAT-I-GHILZAI, 31*st Jan.* 1879.

. . . . . Reuter's telegrams say we have asked Russia whether she has any objection to our going to Herat if Sher Ali goes there; and Russia's reply is, that if we go to Herat she will go to Merv. For my part, I think we shall make a very great mistake if we annex any considerable part of Afghanistan. It is a wretched country, and could not support an army for any length of time, and I am quite sure that, with all India at our back, we could not keep up a force of 20,000 men in one place, and I don't think Russia could do much better than ourselves in that respect, although her troops do not require quite so much food or such good food as our men are accustomed to get. By late telegrams from

Government we are not intended to go any further at present, and, in point of fact, they talk of sending men back to India or below the Bolan. I pity the troops that will have to march across the Cutch in April and perhaps May, when water is very bad and scarce. In midwinter we had often difficulties, and what will it be when men and animals require three times the amount of water they consume in the cold weather? What I am to do I know not. I suppose I shall be left at Candahar till something is settled about the war. Since the Amir's flight,[1] everything is at a standstill, and we don't know now who our enemies are, as we are supposed not to fight with the people. Hereabouts the people have no love for the Amir, and decline to do anything for him. But they don't care about us, and would prefer our room to our company; my plan is to keep on good terms with them, but I insist on getting what the troops want. They always say they have nothing, and yesterday, when a foraging party went into a house to search for grain, they were shown into a room where a woman was found moaning and groaning, and the people about said she had been delivered of a baby that morning. On asking to look at the child, a thumping thing of five or six months old was shown, and the poor woman was requested to get up. Under her bedding was found the entrance to a granary, in which 150 maunds of wheat were hidden! So much for the sick woman, who laughed heartily when the little stratagem was discovered. . . . . I have made up my mind to go back towards Candahar the day after to-morrow. I don't like going over the same ground again, but it can't be helped. . . . .

4th Feb.

I must finish off this and let it go, as I cannot have much to write about on the line of march. Orders have come for the withdrawal from Kelat and Giriskh and the concentration of the force at Candahar, and we are now marching back. Unluckily, last night we

[1] See p. 251 *infra.*

were caught by a storm of rain and snow, the former has, however, prevailed; the camp is simply in a sea of mud, and the poor camels can't move to feed themselves. The horses too are in a miserable plight, and it is difficult to see how they are to be fed if this weather continues. . . . . If we had had this weather at the proper season, the troops would have been unable to do anything. I am thankful that the aims of Government have been carried out before the check took place. . . . .

General Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

CANDAHAR, 13*th Feb.* 1879.

. . . You will be prepared to hear that we are all back in Candahar again, and as more rain is coming, I have moved into a garden house, keeping my tent for use in fine weather. The house is a queer one, the public rooms being gorgeously painted and gilt, but as we have handsome Persian carpets on the floor, corresponding with the walls and ceiling, the effect is good, and, in point of fact, we are most comfortable. The Staff have not settled themselves yet, but they will gradually get into quarters, and then we shall settle down to a humdrum cantonment life. Our only excitement is trying to avoid those rascally Ghazis. A gang of them ran amuck in camp a few days ago, and the soldiers, losing their presence of mind, began to fire very recklessly, and killed more men with their bullets than the Ghazis did with their knives. It is very disgusting having to guard against these brutes, and I am surrounded by sentries as if I were the Emperor of Germany. The mischief of the whole matter is that all the sentries in the world won't save one from a man who has no regard for his own life. . . . .

CHAPTER XVII

IN CANDAHAR

MEANWHILE the progress of events in Northern Afghanistan had been of a rapid and important character. On the advance of the armies under Generals Roberts and Browne, the Amir, Sher Ali Khan, fled from Cabul, and crossed the Oxus into Russian territory, where he received letters from General Kauffman, which must have quenched all hope of receiving Russian aid. Soon afterwards Sher Ali fell ill, and he died on 21st February at Mazar-i-Sharif. His son and successor, Yakub Khan, with whom negotiations had already been opened, writing on the 26th February to Major Cavagnari, announced the fact of his father's death. On this, Major Cavagnari was authorised to communicate the conditions on which the British Government was willing to make peace.

General Stewart to Mrs Davies.

CANDAHAR, *27th February* 1879.

Yours of the 10th reached me two days ago. . . . . You must not suppose that we were at starvation point, because the newspapers have it that we were on short rations for a few days. We had no sugar for three or four days, and our tea and rum were reduced for the same period; but we never wanted for bread and meat, as well as some

sort of vegetables, fowl, etc.; so we were not badly off, under the most unfavourable circumstances. We are all settling down here into summer quarters. . . . . We are getting up cricket, lawn tennis, and Badminton things, so we hope to make the time fly. It will be dull work in the hot days, but that can't be helped so long as there is no failure of health among the men. There is a Hill Station about 70 miles off, near the Khojak, which I am having explored, and I hope some day to see a regiment or two quartered there before I leave this part of the world.

General Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

CANDAHAR, *4th March* 1879.

. . . . I don't know how it happens that the time flies so fast, but it does, and I never find the days long enough for my work. General Biddulph and all his staff dined with me last night,[1] and we made a very creditable appearance, though our liquor consisted of brandy and whisky only. We have a few bottles of cherry brandy, but they would have gone no way amongst so many, consequently we did not produce them on the occasion. I am glad to see you are getting through the winter so comfortably. The people about[2] are very friendly and kind, and I doubt if you would have all been so happy anywhere else. It is wonderful how society affects our comfort, and if it is agreeable any place seems to have good points about it. . . . . As far as my own feelings are concerned, I have had enough of India, and shall be glad to drop into a snug house at home and oblivion. Having now passed the age at which civilians are obliged to quit the public service, *i.e.* 55, I think I have had enough of it. This command is an honourable one, but it has its rough sides too. . . . . We had a good fight the other day out towards Giriskh, and reports are coming in to say that the Ghazis and evil-

[1] General Biddulph returned to India with his Division about this time.

[2] Mrs Stewart was at Exmouth in Devonshire.

The Amir, Sher Ali Khan. [*To face p.* 252.

disposed persons are collecting about 20 miles off and want another fight. In the last affair 250 of the Sind Horse killed 150 men, counted on the field, losing only four of their own men killed and wounded. That account of our march to Candahar is quite true. We were seven or eight hours doing 8 miles, and a weary time we had of it. I don't admit, however, that any part of the delay was due to avoidable causes, because the stoppage was caused by water-courses, which had to be bridged over for the guns. The mistake was bringing the guns at all. But, before I ordered them to go, I had ascertained from our news-writer, a man who had only left Candahar about a week before, that the road was a "splendid one," fit for guns of any size, etc., etc. A native's idea of a good road is a place along which a pony or mule can scramble, and the country round the city was so intersected by water-courses that we had to *work* our way in. It was very aggravating, but having once got into the labyrinth of lanes and water-courses, there was no way of getting out of a fix except by going on. And as the whole city turned out to see the fun, it would have been a pity to disappoint them. We intend to sit here quietly till Yakub or his father have come to their senses. If they don't make some sign shortly, we shall send the Amir's brother, Wuli Mahomed, to Cabul as our friend. It is difficult to say how this will pay; but I fancy some settlement must soon be brought about, as we are now pretty much in the same position as Russia is with regard to Turkey. . . . . Padre Warneford has just come in looking the picture of a brigand in a khaki suit, long white boots, and a beard. . . . .

The last sentence refers to General Stewart's old friend, the Rev. T. J. L. Warneford, who had come up from the Andamans in order to serve as chaplain with the force at Candahar. Mr Warneford has been good enough to give his own account of his joining, and of his service in Afghanistan,

which will be quoted from time to time. These extracts, when read with General Stewart's many references to his chaplain, give a pleasing impression of the happy relations which existed between the two men, and very clearly prove Mr Warneford's title to be a member of the Church militant.

Note by the Rev. T. J. L. Warneford.

In 1878, when I was leaving the Andamans, intending to proceed on furlough to England, I received a letter from General Stewart, who had been appointed to command the Southern Afghanistan Field Force, asking if I would join the force as chaplain. As I was then in Calcutta on my way home, I at once cancelled my leave, and applied for the appointment. Three days settled the matter, and I received a telegram from Adjutant-General Lumsden, at Umballa, telling me to join General Stewart's force without delay. That same evening I left for Umballa. . . . The march to Quetta took some time, and when we reached there we found General Stewart had gone on to Candahar. As soon as a convoy started I was again on the march, and joined General Stewart at Candahar. He received me most kindly, placing me on the Head Quarter Staff, and assigning me a place for my tent close adjoining his own quarters. The following letter I received *en route* :—

General Stewart to Rev. T. J. L. Warneford.

CANDAHAR, 12*th February* 1877.

. . . . I am very glad to think you are coming up, but I fear there is not much chance of service just now, or indeed at all on this side. However, you will see the country, and have a chance of getting a dig in the ribs from a Ghazi, which is, I think, worse than a bullet from the enemy. . . . .

General Stewart to Mrs Davies.

CANDAHAR, *9th March* 1879.

This being a very wet Sunday, I must send you a line. It is awful weather, I fear, at the Khojak, and the regiments returning to India must be having a miserable time of it, because it is impossible to march, and the camels will suffer more than ever. Out of curiosity I asked Brigadier Hughes to count the skeletons of camels lying on the road from Kelat-i-Ghilzai to Candahar, and the list was 1924. This was what we lost out of a division transport of about 3,500. Many more disappeared, but there is no doubt about these, as the carcasses were counted by officers. If our Division lost this number, what will the losses of the army be? We have already got a mortality return of over 9000 camels, and this does not include the deaths in the train between Sukkur and Dadur. More than half of these deaths is due to starvation. . . . . It is a great blessing having such capital officers as Chapman and Hills, who do their work so thoroughly and so well. . . . .

General Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

CANDAHAR, *21st March* 1879.

. . . . . We are quite settling down here, and all thought of fighting has died out. Of course every one is anxious to know what is being done, but these matters are properly kept secret till an arrangement has been come to. The Government have insisted on three things: (1) rectification of the Frontier; (2) the independence of the Passes, the control of which is to be in our hands; and (3) the location of British Agents in Afghanistan. By a late telegram from the Foreign Office, I hear the negotiations are progressing favourably, and that Yakub is sensible of his inability to cope with us. We have letters to say that General Stolitoff wrote from Livadia that the

Emperor of Russia advised the Amir to play with us during the winter, *as we could do nothing during that time of year*, and that in the spring he would come to the Amir's assistance. Yakub Khan admits the receipt of letters to this effect, and I believe they are authentic. Every one thought we could do nothing during the winter months, and if the weather we had in February and early in this month had come in December, or early in January, we should have been brought to a standstill. Have you seen that there was some talk of disavowing my proceedings in going to Giriskh and Kelat *in strength?* The Calcutta correspondent for the *Times* said I exceeded my authority, and I feel quite sure he was told this by some one at Government House, because they telegraphed to me that it was not advisable to go there at all! Fortunately, the telegram did not reach me till I was at Kelat, and as matters turned out, it was a very fortunate thing indeed, for our going there has had the best effect on the people of this country, and it shows the military critics of the Continent that we can move about in the depths of the winter as well as the Russians. . . . . I must now go off to a big Durbar; this is the New Year's Day of the Mahomedans and all the swells of the place are coming to make their bow. . . . .

Last night it was so hot I was nearly stifled, and now there is a regular storm of cold wind and dust; this is very trying, as it is not easy to meet the changes of temperature. . . . . Fortunately, the troops are in very good health, and they don't complain, but one must always be anxious while they are likely to be exposed to great heat at a place which is, even in the estimation of natives, notoriously unhealthy. . . . .

23rd.

I went to service to-day with the 1st Brigade, and am very uncomfortable from standing in a broiling sun so long. Warneford did not keep us long either, but standing in the sun is much more fatiguing than riding or walking in it. It showed, though, what the climate is, when

we can have the troops out all day without much inconvenience.

General Stewart to General Lumsden.

CANDAHAR, 26*th March* 1879.

. . . I am glad to hear everything is ready for a move in the North, as Yakub Khan's friends want to have another shy at us before they give in. People here say so at all events. Our movements to Kelat and Giriskh have turned out well after all, though at one time I was inclined to think the order for withdrawal from these places would be attended with much inconvenience. The Ghilzais[1] are very anxious, I think, to throw off the Barakzye yoke[2] and set up for themselves, and those between Ghuzni and Candahar would do so to-morrow *if we would engage to back them.* The more I see of the Afghans the less I like them. They have pleasant manners, but they don't care a brass farthing for their country or for each other. It is simply every man for himself, and their greed is disgusting. We are quartering the troops very much in the same way as was done in the last war. The roofs of many of the barrack-rooms have to be rebuilt, but when finished, the troops should be pretty comfortable. I am having the tents arranged on platforms inside the squares, and providing them with charpoys,[3] so they will be tolerably comfortable. The late rains destroyed all our bricks and the works have been thrown back a month, at least, by this mishap, but the weather continues cool, and we all sleep under two or three blankets even in houses with closed doors and windows. I hope this is the usual Candahar weather.

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[1] The Afghan tribes between Candahar and Ghuzni are generally described as the Ghilzais.

[2] *I.e.* the rule of the descendants of the Barakzye Amir, Dost Mahomed Khan.

[3] Native beds.

Had you ever the curiosity to enquire where the old graveyard was?[1] A native, who declares he was here in 1840-41, points out a spot about 500 yards from the Eedgah Gate of the Citadel to the north, but there are only about twenty graves in it, and I am quite sure there must have been many more.

I am getting the city cleaned up and the streets repaired, and the change in the appearance of the place, since we came here, is great. It seemed to me a hopeless task, but Major Protheroe,[2] who has charge of the town, aided by the Subadar Major of the 26th P.I., an A.I. Afridi, are doing wonders. The people did not understand our conservancy ideas at first, but a little gentle pressure has made matters work like oil. I have also started a dispensary in the city under Dr Brereton, a Persian-speaking Irishman, who says the Afghans are the finest people on the face of the earth.

I must confess that I am doing all this more in our own interests than from motives of philanthropy. Still I am not sorry that good is being done to the people, who have no quarrel with us. The worst of it is, that, do what you will for them, everything that costs money or labour will be allowed to slide the instant our backs are turned. You must not believe the stories you read in the *Civil and Military Gazette*,[3] about the thousands of enemies who are said to be in the field, ready to eat us up, on the other side of the Argundab. A lot of Moolvies and Talib-ul-ilms[4] did collect in Zemindawar and Nish, and were joined by some robbers and others on the look-out for plunder. They came as far as Khakrez, some 35 miles off, and plundered a Parsiwan village, but the snow-storm which occurred at that time was too much for them, and

[1] Referring to General Lumsden's sojourn in Candahar in 1857-58.

[2] Now Major-General Protheroe, C.S.I., C.M.G., commanding in Burmah. This officer served under General Stewart in the Andamans.

[3] A Lahore paper.

[4] Religious students.

they broke up just as I was on the point of sending Palliser to look them up with a small Brigade. The leader, Abdul Mujid, has since written to me to say that the whole thing was a mistake, and that he was forced into the business without his consent, etc., etc. The people have found out that we intend to deal fairly and honestly with them, and they are now bringing in everything we require in abundance.

General Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

CANDAHAR, 29*th March* 1879.

. . . . . Since I last wrote the prospects of peace are not so favourable. The Amir[1] refuses to give up any territory, and as he seems very obstinate on the subject, I presume our troops will have to go to Cabul. Sam Browne's and Bobs' columns are now ready for a move, and as soon as the snows have melted sufficiently, I presume they will go on, unless Yakub changes his tune within the next few days. There is not much chance of service in this quarter. The Chief left by me in charge of Kelat, writes that a force is coming down from Ghuzni to oust him, but as he asks for no assistance, I am not sure that he believes the report himself. Even if assistance were wanted, I could not give it at present, as we have no carriage to move more than a small Brigade, and if we were threatened by a considerable force we should look uncommonly foolish. . . . . So old ——— is going to marry again. I think the old chap is quite right, provided he can get a wife who will agree with his mode of living and habits, but it is a risky thing with a young girl; if I had to do that sort of thing, I should look out for a gay widow, one who knows how to give a good dinner! ! . . . . It has been pouring here for the last two days, and all our bricks[2] are for the second time destroyed; it is very

[1] Yakub Khan, son and successor of the Amir Sher Ali.

[2] Sun-dried bricks.

disgusting, as the men cannot get into their barracks till they are roofed in, and without bricks nothing can be done. All the buildings here are domed, and look like huge bee-hives. The roofs are built on concentrated arches in a very ingenious way, and as there is no timber in the country, these domed huts answer every purpose, and are cooler than ordinary flat-roofed houses. . . . .

General Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

CANDAHAR, *2nd April* 1879.

. . . . . I like your idea of coming to Candahar immensely! Why, parties of followers cannot move half-a-mile from camp without the chance of having their throats cut. Two sappers escorting some camels were attacked three nights ago within a few hundred yards of their own camp, by a gang who, fortunately, got the worst of it, for one of them was killed and two badly wounded, while one only of the sappers was wounded. These attacks are organised by persons from a distance, who are instigated by fanatical priests whom, unfortunately, we cannot lay hands on. . . . . It is becoming horribly warm, and in my big room now the thermometer is 76°, and the flies are in myriads. Fly papers slay them in hundreds, but they do not seem to have much effect on the lot. I suppose we shall be driven into the taikhanas[1] very soon. . . . . We have had two scrimmages on this side, but as these have been with independent Afghans, and have nothing to say to the general question at issue between us and the Amir, I don't care much about them. They were successfully managed, however, as far as I can hear, and our troops have suffered very small loss while punishing the enemy severely. . . . .

6th April.

Yakub Khan is still negotiating, but he refuses to give up any territory. He agrees to all other conditions.

[1] Cellars.

I fancy he thinks it necessary to have a fight for his honour. He says if he is beaten, he will throw himself on the mercies of the English, thus implying that he has not much confidence in his own power. I wish the business were over, for idleness is not very pleasing to any one, and the men prefer fighting to digging and building, which now occupy their sole attention. . . . .

General Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

CANDAHAR, 10*th April* 1879.

. . . . . .

12*th April.*

Here we are nearly in the middle of April, and the weather is simply delightful. We have just had a shower of rain and the garden looks lovely. I can't say, though, that the prospect outside is equally beautiful, as beyond the corn-fields there is not a blade of vegetation, but the mildness of the temperature is a blessing to the troops, who are still in small tents and cannot get into their quarters for some weeks. . . . . The negotiations for peace are progressing very slowly. Yakub is holding out stoutly about the abandonment of his territory, and I have no doubt he does so mainly because a number of people in England have said we ought not to annex any portion of it, and he may think that the Government here will draw back on that point. I am quite sure, though, that we cannot draw back, as we are committed to engagements with independent tribes in the Khyber, and as for Peshin, we must hold it if we remain at Quetta. About Kuram I am not so clear; the possession of that valley makes us masters at all times of Cabul, but then it has this drawback, that our enemies can generally assail our communications along the whole length, unless we can make the tribes inhabiting the valley give up their predatory habits and become trustworthy subjects of Great Britain. Yakub

has a very difficult game to play, for he must know perfectly well that he has no chance against us in the field, while the people firmly believe that they are twice as good soldiers as we are! I suppose it will end in our going to Cabul, but the delay in bringing matters to a settlement is a bore to us here. Fortunately, the people in these parts are afraid of us, and do not give us much trouble, but they are easily stirred up, and so independent, that a few villagers think nothing of making war on their own hook when they think they have a favourable opportunity of doing a little Kâfir[1]-killing and getting plunder at the same time. . . . .

General Stewart to Mrs Davies.

CANDAHAR, 13*th April* 1879.

. . . It is still pleasant here in the house, and we sleep under blankets. Outside in the sun, the thermometer rose to 104°, but in the room where we are writing it is only 74°, with all the windows open and no verandah. The back rooms are many degrees cooler. I daresay you would be glad of such a climate. I see by old books that even in the hottest day of June and July, the thermometer ranges at night from 58° to 79°, but rarely going up so high as 70°. If so, we shall not have to suffer a great deal from heat, if the year is an ordinary one. In the daytime it is very hot in small tents, but Warneford and others do their work in the open under the peach trees. . . . . Protheroe has some political work to do, and has charge of the city, in which he is doing good work. It is a filthy place, but he has cleaned out all the drains, made new streets, and swept the place up, and it is now rather a lively place to visit of an afternoon. The streets are crowded with people, and those who don't mind poking about the shops, pick up no end of curios. . . . .

General Stewart's views at this time in regard to

[1] Infidel.

the question of the permanent occupation of Candahar are set forth in the following paper.

Memorandum on the Strategical and Political value of Candahar as a Position.

Covering as it does the roads from Eastern Persia and Herat, as well as that from Cabul and Ghuzni, Candahar is, no doubt, a position of much importance. The features of the country in the immediate vicinity of the city are favourable for defence, but its occupation by us would entail the establishment of strong posts on the Helmund and at Kelat-i-Ghilzai at least, bringing the intervening districts under our control.

Assuming, however, the retention of the country embraced within the limits here indicated, we do not thereby obtain a satisfactory frontier, because it would be impossible to guard such a long and exposed line without a series of military or police posts as connecting links.

While recognising the strategical importance of Candahar, its occupation *now* would, in my opinion, be a mistake, even from a military point of view, seeing we could at any moment lay hands on it from our base in Peshin.

I am aware that military critics of high authority consider the retention of Candahar to be essential to the security of our frontier, on the ground, apparently, that the Afghans might some day construct works at that place, which would neutralise the advantages which our proximity to it would give us.

This is, no doubt, a possible contingency, but it does not counterbalance the immediate and very patent disadvantage of a premature occupation; and our engagements with the Afghan state will be on a very unsatisfactory footing, if they do not make due provision to meet contingencies of this character. As a purely military question, therefore, the possession of Candahar would in my judgment place us in a false position, and in point of fact be a source of great disadvantage to us.

The political objections to the retention of Candahar in opposition to the wishes of the Afghans seem to me to be very strong.

For many years our policy in India has ceased to be an aggressive one, and this policy has been avowed in the utterances of the Government during the present war. It follows, therefore, that on principle we ought not to annex a rood of land that is not really essential to the security of our frontiers; to do otherwise would be to discredit us in the estimation of the world.

It has been suggested that we might hold Candahar by an amicable agreement with the Afghan Government, and, if this could be arranged, it would be unobjectionable, but I am inclined to think this is the last thing the Afghans would be disposed to accede to.

Though the people of this province profess to be tired of the Barakzye rule, it must not be assumed that they are prepared to receive us with favour. So far as I am in a position to judge, they detest us cordially; and I am under the impression that our immunity from anything like organised opposition is largely due to the fact that our dealings with the people are taken as an indication that our occupation is a temporary one only.

As regards the unpopularity of the Barakzye *régime* it should be recollected that the military force employed in the province for many years has been of insignificant strength; a fact that discredits the idea of an oppressive or very obnoxious system of government.

It has further been alleged by high authority, that the occupation of Candahar would be a *final* settlement of the frontier question, but, if there is one point more than another on which it would be safe to utter a prophecy, it is that circumstances would necessitate further movements at no distant date, until some natural boundary had been reached; indeed, the most fatal of the objections to Candahar as a frontier is its want of defined and defensible boundaries.

By restricting our advance to Peshin we have a strong and, in most respects, a satisfactory frontier; and from that

position we can lay our hands on Candahar at any moment; and this being so, I fail to see why we should anticipate events by undertaking a costly, onerous, and exceedingly troublesome charge, involving, as it must do, the government of a large province, inhabited by a warlike, fanatical, and turbulent population, whose independence it is our interest to foster, and whose friendship we should do our utmost to secure.

CANDAHAR, 18*th April* 1879.

General Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

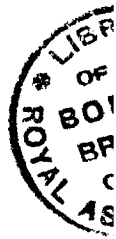
CANDAHAR, 19*th April* 1879.

I have not been able to commence my weekly budget so early this week as I have been in the habit of doing, because I have been busy writing reports. The Chief has asked my opinion about the retention of Candahar, and I have gone strongly against our doing so. I quite agree with Norman[1] as to the impolicy of annexation save in cases where it is forced on us for our own safety. I think we must keep Peshin on this ground, but we are making a mistake, I think, in holding Kuram and the Khyber. Yakub has suggested that an officer should be sent to Cabul to settle terms of peace; but as he persistently objects to cede any portion of his territory, I do not see how we can meet him, or negotiate, because we are resolved not to give up Peshin or Kuram. It is rather amusing to read the comments *now* made about our going to Kelat and Giriskh and our withdrawal therefrom, and I can see that the *Times* Calcutta correspondent has been told—no doubt by some one about the Government—that I went beyond my instructions. I did not do so, however, though the Government changed their mind, and begged me not to go away from Candahar; but their order did not reach me till I had been some days at Kelat. Our advance on Giriskh had frightened the Russians into the belief that

[1] Sir Henry Norman.

we were going on to Herat, and as they had no means of making a move in that quarter themselves, they were anxious to stop our advance by throwing over the Afghans and promising not to interfere in future with their country. This satisfied our Government, and we were told to keep quiet here. There has been some fighting in Shoráwak and on the Tull-Chotiali route, but these scrimmages are of no political importance. The people, who have never before seen Europeans, object to our marching through their country and try to stop us; but they don't fight for their Government, and have no idea of anything but plundering us. Poor wretches! They fancy we are no better armed than we were forty years ago, and it is not till they feel the power of our rifles that they see the hopelessness of interfering with us. I have this moment been obliged to move my table and stop writing by a horrid snake poking its head out of a hole in the ceiling, immediately over the spot where I sit. It came down, evidently attracted by my bald head, and I daresay it would have dropped on me and frightened me out of my wits if Hills had not shouted and frightened the creature back into its hole. I believe it was a harmless species, but I have a horror of snakes. A man came in just now to catch it, but did not quite succeed. However, after muttering certain incantations over a handful of earth, he put the stuff into a hole and said we shall not be troubled in future with it! I have my doubts. The house seems full of snakes; one was seen running up the stairs to the roof a few days ago by the telegraph signaller, who sits on the landing; but could not be found when he and others got on to the roof of the house. This is intended for Norah's[1] edification. . . . .

[1] His youngest daughter.



CHAPTER XVIII

AN OUTBREAK OF CHOLERA.

General Stewart to Mrs Davies.

CANDAHAR, 20*th April* 1879.

. . . . . THE negotiations with Yakub are progressing very slowly. He would come to our terms if left to himself, but he has bad advisers about him, who influence his mind; and he probably sees that an immediate submission would injure him in the estimation of his countrymen, who still think they can hold their own against us. It is a pity that the Home Government has been so anxious to bring about a peace, as our evident desire to settle the matter is quite misunderstood by the Afghans, who fancy that we are unable to advance. We have no object in going to Cabul, and if we are forced to go, it will injure Yakub without helping us—a thing we have no title to do, as our plain interest is to keep him strong so long as he is friendly to us. However, from the latest letters from Cabul, things appear to be more unsettled than ever, and I am not at all clear that Russia is not quietly plotting against us, as some of the most influential of Yakub's advisers are unaccountably bitter against any terms being made with us. We have been asked to send an officer to Cabul to treat, but I do not know that one will be sent until the Amir has given some positive promise of his acceptance of conditions on which a treaty can be based. Hitherto we have fought shy of doing this, though he has expressed his anxiety to remain on terms of friendship. Like all Orientals, he likes to haggle, and thinks he may get better terms by wearing out our patience. . . . ——— has had the folly to com-

plain of my want of courtesy in not consulting him about the officers of his department whom I sent away and those I kept here. I sent off the useless men and only kept those who knew their work and could do it. However, I am now forced to tell the truth—and they shall have it with a vengeance, for I shall spare none of them. . . . .

General Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

CANDAHAR, *26th April* 1879.

. . . . . I have seen the question of my appointment to the Madras command mooted in the papers here and at home, but I do not know what gave rise to the reports, as Chamberlain's time is not nearly expired, though I am told by ——— that he intends to go home next winter with the Crawford-Chamberlains. No doubt, when the vacancy takes place, there will be a question raised as to whether the appointment should not fall to an Indian officer, and in that case I should probably be thought of among others; but I have no particular desire for the post, as the pay is only sufficient to keep a family going, and I do not wish to stay in India merely to live. I can do that at home. Of course, if the appointment was offered to me in a way that I could not decline, I should have to put my private feelings aside, but I have no reason to suppose that any offer will be made at all. However, I never trouble my head about these things, I have no particular ambition to gratify. The only appointment I ever coveted much I lost — the Adjutant-Generalship. . . . . Fortune has, no doubt, been good to me, and I have nothing to complain of. I have had a chance that falls to only a few men in a generation. . . . .

General Stewart to Mrs Davies.

CANDAHAR, *27th April* 1879.

. . . . . I suppose something will be decided soon, as Yakub Khan is coming down to discuss matters with our agent at Jelalabad. Whatever happens, we are not to move further. I wish the whole thing could be settled, as

I have no desire to retain a command in these parts when peace has been proclaimed. . . . .

General Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

CANDAHAR, *3rd May* 1879.

I must try and scribble a few lines before breakfast, as I am fit for nothing the whole day. For the last week I have been suffering from neuralgia or brow ague, which comes on regularly every day after breakfast, and lasts till sunset, when it goes off. It is very distressing as I can do nothing while the fit is on me. I can neither write, read, nor sleep, and altogether it makes me very miserable. When I am free from pain I am as well as ever. . . . .

I had a letter from Lord Napier of Magdala last mail. I fancy he wants to know my reasons for recommending our retiring from Candahar, as he has advocated a different policy in Parliament. I gave him in reply a copy of my memorandum on the subject, and I do not think my argument can be disturbed or met. What I say is, that every advantage expected from the occupation of Candahar can be secured at far less cost by the occupation of Peshin, which gives us in addition a very strong defensible frontier. A great number of people think Candahar essential and a barrier against Russia. But they forget that our keeping the province would reduce the Afghan kingdom to a position of dependence, which would always be a danger to us and utterly prevent the Afghans themselves from ever becoming our hearty friends. . . . .

General Stewart to Mrs Davies.

CANDAHAR, *5th May* 1879.

. . . . . The last news from India about Yakub Khan is satisfactory; and, as he has given out at Durbar in Cabul what our terms are, I presume he is prepared to accept them. In a letter from the father of the Kàzi here we have full particulars of the conditions of peace; and as they are in all particulars accurate, I fancy peace will be brought about in some way. Perhaps the cession of

territory may not be formally included in this treaty; but it will be understood that we are not going to give up all we now hold. It is too late to leave Candahar this summer, but I presume we shall make a retrograde movement to Peshin in October or November.

General Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

KOKERAN,[1] 11*th May* 1879.

I have come out here for change of air, and, strange to say, my neuralgia left me at once. . . . . I shall go back to-morrow evening if my neuralgia holds off to-day and to-morrow. I hear from the Foreign Office that Yakub Khan, who has come into our camp, is likely to submit to almost any terms. Our only fear is, that, if we are too hard on him, his own people may turn on him and kick him out, in which case we should be in an awkward position. I suspect we are going to let them down easy, and may not, after all, take either Kuram or Peshin. . . . . There is no doubt the Khyber line, though a short one, is the most difficult one to hold, as every mile of it gives cover to our enemies; but political arrangements seem to be bad, for there is hardly a day that the telegraph wire has not been cut, and the posts and escorts are constantly annoyed. Though I have a longer line to guard, the country is much more open, and as a matter of fact, our telegraph has not been cut once. I certainly expected it would be interrupted once or twice a week, but up to date it has not been touched. I have taken great pains to put the proper men in charge of it, and I have told the villagers along the road, that they will be held responsible for all damages, and, as I have enforced the responsibility on other occasions, I think they have made up their minds to let us alone. It is certainly curious to see our posts and telegraph working as quietly and regularly as they do in any part of India. The people are paying up their revenue, and the residents of Candahar say there has been no such

[1] A few miles from Candahar.

peace for many years. Yet we do not interfere with their concerns in any way. I suppose they are all waiting to see the result of the present negotiations with Yakub. . . . . Perhaps, if he entirely throws himself on our mercy, he may be let off something, as the Home Government is much opposed to annexation, and on good grounds too. Whatever is done, we must stay where we are till next October.

I am rather wroth with the Head Quarters people just now, because they have "Isandula" and "the Zulus" on the brain. They beg me to entrench every outpost, as well as the Candahar Cantonment, but I have told them pretty plainly they are writing about things they do not understand. Of course I don't say so in so many words, but this is the meaning of my reply. They write to me as if we were all a parcel of baby recruits, and have to be taught our A B C. However, they have got the wrong sow by the ear this time, and I am in no mood to put up with their rubbish. All my outposts were well cared for when they were first placed. As for Candahar, I don't intend to fight in the Cantonments, and therefore don't intend to *fortify* them. Then as to their nonsense about Ghazis. Do they suppose Ghazis come up and say, "I am a Ghazi"? Why, kings and emperors cannot be protected always against assassins, and I am no more able to provide against the attacks of such fanatics than other people. Again, they worry me with all sorts of questions about commissariat delinquencies which happened three or four months ago, and are now forgotten by us here. My answer is generally a reference to reports made at the time. This is the old, old story. Things are written to Head Quarters, looked at, and put away in bundles, to be forgotten till a row takes place, and then the Government and Commander-in-Chief require to be informed how this and that happened, etc., etc., full information being all the time on their own shelves. Fortunately, Chapman is such an A1 man with his pen that I seldom have to write a letter myself. I tell him what to say, and he does it better than I can. . . .

General Stewart to General Lumsden.

CANDAHAR, *17th May* 1879.

. . . . . We are getting on very quietly here, and the Khans and chief men are coming in from the most distant parts of the Province. It is very difficult to get at their real feelings about the state of affairs, but one thing is, I think, quite clear—they are sick of the Barakzye ascendancy, and they do not look on Yakub as a strong man. I don't think it would be a sound policy to hold Candahar, but I begin to think it would be easier to manage than I thought when I came here first. But your Afghan is such a fickle ruffian that I am not inclined to give any very definite opinions about him or his ways.

General Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

CANDAHAR, *23rd May* 1879.

. . . . The terms of peace have been settled, and I am expecting orders to-day, to tell the troops to-morrow at the Birthday Parade. The terms do not differ much from the original demands, except that we are to give up the revenue of the Kuram, Peshin, and Sibi to the Amir, while we occupy them and govern them. . . . . The heat is not so excessive, and the difference between the day and night is not now so great as it was, so sickness ought to be diminishing. The troops, having to occupy old native buildings that have not been cleaned out since we were here forty years ago, cannot expect to be as well as they would be in their own barracks in India. Still, there is not much to complain of, except that people will grumble when they have nothing else to do. They are actually looking forward to to-morrow's Parade as something to go and see . . . .

24th May.

. . . . This morning I got up at five o'clock for the Queen's Birthday Parade. The force looked very well, and marched past capitally, considering they have had next to no parades

for nearly a year. They rather muddled the *feu de joie*, but, barring this, the ceremony went off well. . . . . The papers have it that peace has been arranged, and that the treaty is to be signed on Monday (to-morrow). This is likely to be true, as I had a letter from the Foreign Office some days ago, informing me that the basis of the treaty had been agreed to—so that nothing but the settlement of details remain to be discussed and arranged. Some people have it that we shall retire at once, but I feel sure we cannot move before October, if even then. We must get away as soon as we can, so that all the troops returning to India may be out of Peshin before the setting in of winter. Most of us will be right glad to leave. I have just had a bout of fly-killing, and in my eagerness to slay smashed the window, which is a bore, as glass is by no means plentiful here. However, the flies drive me nearly mad, they are so numerous and troublesome. . . . .

The treaty between the British Government and the new Amir, Yakub Khan, was eventually signed at Gundamak on the 26th May 1879. One of the conditions provided for a permanent British Resident at Cabul, and the right to depute agents to Herat and other frontier places. It had also been explained to the Amir—an intimation which was very distasteful to him—that the withdrawal of our troops from Candahar and other parts of Afghan territory which were to be evacuated eventually, could not for sanitary reasons be immediate. The Amir was, however, permitted to appoint his own Governors of Provinces, empowered to rule without interference by British officers.

General Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

CANDAHAR, 30*th May* 1879.

. . . . . Yesterday I got a cipher telegram from the Private Secretary to the Viceroy, asking me if I could

leave the force here safely *a month or two hence*, for the purpose of becoming "President of an important Commission on Military Organization and Expenditure." I said I thought I could leave this command safely with the military and political officers now here, and that I would try to get to India if the roads were not absolutely impassable. . . . . What the Commission is for I have no idea, but I daresay it is on commissariat and such matters. I don't much fancy this sort of employment, because I think these questions should always be dealt with by the departments of the Government, and not by strong Commissions. It is the fashion, however, at home, and it generally arises because people are either unwilling or unable to do their own work. I have been on one or two of these Commissions, and I don't like them. . . . . This wretched head of mine does not get any better; a great many people are ailing, and I fancy it is the extreme dryness of the air that does not agree with Europeans. I think I am getting old, and I am sure there must be something radically wrong with me when anything that bothers me makes my head ache at once. . . . . Though I have not said a great deal about it, my anxieties have been very great for a long time, and when the troops left Candahar in January[1] I never felt sure that a breakdown might not take place any day; and if it had, the whole blame would have fallen on me, as few people thought I was justified in coming on to Candahar in midwinter without more than a week's food, and not more than two days for cattle. I calculated it all out beforehand, and I reckoned that moving on, as we were, was better than waiting, because the Commissariat were at that time actually unable to feed us from day to day; and I made up my mind that, if the people were to suffer, it was better that our enemies should do so before our friends in Peshin. My plan succeeded very well on the whole, but it was a very difficult thing to keep up the spirits of the troops, as well as my own, when I never knew what a day would

[1] *I.e.* for Kelat-i-Ghilzai and Giriskh.

bring forth, and this too in the face of heaps of croakers who thought their last day had come. It is all over now, and we are so comfortable that people have forgotten these things, but I have no doubt I am suffering for them. . . . .

General Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

CANDAHAR, *June* 1879.

. . . . . We begin to move from here about the 15th September, and the whole force should be across the Khojak by the end of October. . . . . Now that peace has been arranged, people are thinking about nothing but getting away, but, luckily, there is no way of effecting a retreat from the charming place till October. . . . . I wonder what the people at home will say about the treaty. I think we have taken too much country, and have made some very stupid blunders in detail, which will lead to grief hereafter. However, everybody is very jubilant here, and Lord Lytton is getting no end of congratulations from all sides. I think the war was unavoidable, although some people don't admit it; and, therefore, the new treaty was necessary to our preservation, for it is clear that if we had allowed Sher Ali to do as he liked without interference he would have had a Russian force in Afghan territory. I am now writing my final report on the operations, and the most unpleasant part of all is the recommendation of officers. The usual thing is to praise everybody, but I am only to give the names of certain officials in the body of the despatch, and the rest will go into lists which will not be published. I daresay this will give much dissatisfaction, but I think it is the proper way of recording services which are not very conspicuous, but are still deserving of notice. . . .

General Stewart to Mrs Davies.

CANDAHAR, *8th June* 1879.

. . . . . Cholera has crept up towards us, and has now reached Quetta, thanks to the Head Quarters people and

Government allowing General Phayre[1] to collect thousands of men and animals about the Bolan. If they had taken my advice, we should not have had a man in the Pass, and the native travellers, being few, could have been put under control. They would have their own way, however, and I suppose we shall have, as usual, to pay the piper. Fortunately, nobody thinks of these things here, and the force may escape; but we are so crowded in space that there must be a general break-up of the force if the epidemic should appear among us. As we have only very small tents any move would be very trying. . . . .

General Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

CANDAHAR, 21*st June* 1879.

. . . . . In one of my late letters I think I told you that I was asked to go to Simla to preside on a Commission regarding army organization and retrenchment. Some four or five days ago I read in the *Candahar News* that Ashley Eden was appointed President of this Commission, and yesterday I had a message from the Viceroy, saying my services would not be required as a civilian was to be President. I am not disappointed at this result. . . . . The work was not to my taste. Retrenchment at all times is a disagreeable task. . . . . I went out on Wednesday last about twenty miles on the Giriskh road to see some wonderful caves. There was a large party of us, and we spent two very pleasant days in the country, though the caves themselves were rather a *do.* They were very extensive, and one might wander about in the heart of the mountains for days, but there was nothing to see except a few stalactites and stalagmites which show that thousands of years ago there must have been forests on the hills, and plenty of moisture which *percolated* through the caves. *When* the water used to percolate as far as the caves

[1] Of the Bombay Army.

it is impossible to say, but we know there were no forests here in the time of Alexander the Great. The outing was a treat, and I should like to have stayed a week longer, but as the cholera was creeping towards Candahar, I did not like to go away from a telegraph. . . . .

General Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

CANDAHAR, 1*st July* 1879.

. . . . . Yesterday we heard of Lord Lawrence's death, and to-day we got a long special Gazette from Lord Lytton, who praises Lord Lawrence as the finest fellow that has ruled India since the time of Warren Hastings. As Lord Lawrence was the bitterest opponent of Lord Lytton's policy, and the man who raised or tried to raise all England against him, this praise comes with a good grace . . . . . but it seems to me that the thing is just a little overdone. . . . .

Tell Norah that we caught that snake, or, at any rate, one exactly like it. I looked into its mouth, and found it was perfectly harmless; but I can't bear snakes of any sort, and was glad that this one was killed. There is still another in the house. . . . .

5*th July.*

I have nothing to add to what I have already written, except that cholera has not as yet attacked the troops, black or white, in Candahar. We have had 22 cases all among syces, grass-cutters, and dooli-bearers. This is strange, as these classes are fed now exactly like the sepoy, and are as well looked after. . . . .

General Stewart to Mrs Davies.

CANDAHAR, 12*th July* 1879.

. . . . . We have now got cholera all over the Cantonment, in the city, and the surrounding villages; but though we are losing a goodly number of cases, the type of the disease seems to me to be mild. Yesterday and last night we lost three European soldiers; but up to the present time of writing we have no more European cases. . . . .

In accordance with the terms of the treaty of Gundamak, the Amir Yakub Khan appointed his cousin, Sirdar Sher Ali Khan, to be Governor of the Candahar province—but it was announced that the military occupation of the city by the British troops was to be continued for a time. The Sirdar arrived on 23rd July, and charge of the city was made over to him on the 10th August.

General Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

CANDAHAR, 17*th July* 1879.

. . . . . We are now in the middle of a sharp attack of cholera; for a long time it stuck to the fellows in the fort, but it came into Cantonments about a fortnight ago, and the last four days has been bad. We had 104 cases in three days, and during that time every European attacked died. Yesterday we had only 12 admissions and four deaths, so that we may consider it is passing away; it has now been three weeks in the Force, and the doctors give it another week to burn out. The strange thing is that Norman's regiment in the fort, with cholera all round it, has not yet had a single case. His is the only corps in the Force that has escaped, and the reason given is that the men all drink filtered water. The Europeans usually drink filtered water too, but no European regiment has escaped.

. . . . . The new Governor of Candahar is close at hand. He has not sent me any notice, and I fear he will be disappointed about his reception unless he mends his manners. I am not going to give up my control over the city and neighbourhood till I go away. The Government has rather an insane desire to see us living here in friendly contact with the Afghans, but giving them the control of the city and country. I believe if this were done, we should have no end of murderous attacks on our men in a very short time. . . . .

18th July.

. . . . . Cholera is a shade better to-day, but the cases drop in from all parts of the Cantonments. The Gurkhas do not improve as I expected by change of camp, and I have to go and see what can be done to mend matters this evening. I fancy the enormous quantity of fruit and vegetables accounts for many of the cases; it is rather a bore cholera coming just at the fruit season. We have all varieties of grapes in great profusion; they sell at exactly a penny a pound, and the coolies feed on them. The peaches are splendid to look at, but somehow they do not ripen properly. Nectarines, apples, and apricots are very common. . . . .

General Stewart to Mrs Stewart.

CANDAHAR, *23rd July* 1879.

. . . . . I see in the latest telegrams that I, among others, have been recommended for a K.C.B. I suppose it is a pleasant thing to be a K.C.B., as people think so much of it, but it does not give me any very great delight, and few people know the difference between it and a K.C.S.I. or any other sort of knighthood. I would not mind so much if all the others got their rewards at the same time, but I do not care to be the only one here to receive a reward when so many around me have as good, if not better, claims than myself. . . . . The new Governor of Candahar arrived this morning from Cabul, but I have not seen him. I caused him to be received with all honours; but he arrived at the city more than an hour late, and Norman, who had command of the guard of honour, had to rush up and give him his salute at his residence some time after he arrived there. However, the old gentleman took his salute, and looked pleased, though it was a little late. . . . . The people said they were sorry to part with us, but I am told the whole city turned out to welcome Sher Ali, and Molloy heard a man exclaim, "Thank God, we have now a Mahomedan ruler!". . . . .

General Stewart to Mrs Davies.

CANDAHAR, *24th July* 1879.

. . . . . We have had a good deal of sickness all over the place, and have lost three officers. Indeed, few of the Europeans attacked have recovered. We have broken up regiments, and filled every place where there are trees to give shade; but we are most unfortunate in having only our field service tents, which are no protection from the sun, and even of these we have none to spare for large numbers of sick. However, the epidemic is passing away, and I hope we have seen the worst of it. It has been an anxious time for me, as most of those in authority quite lose their heads when cholera breaks out. . . . . The troops quartered in *new* buildings have suffered most—a very strange circumstance. . . . .

The new Governor arrived here yesterday, and is to visit me to-day. He has given the officers who have seen him a favourable impression of him. They say that he is most friendly to Russia; but I daresay he is the friend of whoever is strongest in his eyes. . . . .

Later in the day General Stewart received Sher Ali Khan, the new Governor of Candahar, in full durbar, the ceremonial passing off well.

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

31st July 1879.

. . . . . I have to-day got a copy of the *Gazette* containing the Cabul honours, and I am not at all pleased with the distribution. I am very disgusted to find Chapman has not had the C.B., for no one in the force deserved it more than himself. They have given the honours to certain officers according to Presidencies, as if that had anything to do with the matter! . . . . As nobody in my force had got anything except Biddulph, Sankey (a

Madras engineer), and Malcolmson (a Bombay Cavalry Officer), I am not very well pleased, and feel that I have almost got my K.C.B. on false pretences. I don't quite know that I like my new designation, but I suppose I shall get accustomed to it in time. By the time this reaches you, you will have settled down to the new order of things, and my congratulations will be rather stale. . . . . .

Sir Donald Stewart to Mrs Davies.

CANDAHAR, *5th Aug.* 1879.

I received your telegram giving congratulations of yourself and the Johnsons, in due course, and now return my best thanks in due form. I was very pleased, of course; but still it was not an unmixed pleasure, as some of those who deserved reward most in my force were unnoticed. There is always a difficulty in awarding honours, and those who have the selection will never please everybody. But when all is said, I don't understand how Chapman has been left out, for no one has earned a C.B. more deservedly than himself. There are one or two others who have strong claims, but, unhappily, these things are not in my gift. I suppose we shall clear out of this sooner than I expected. Cholera is still so bad that more than three-quarters of the troops are in camp, and I am sending them to Peshin as fast as I can. The first week in December will see us all out of Candahar, I hope. . . . .

Major Cavagnari — who had now become Sir Louis Cavagnari, K.C.B.—was appointed, under the treaty, to be the first British Resident at Cabul. Cavagnari, with his staff, reached the Afghan capital on the 24th July, and received quarters in the Bala Hissar. Just before leaving the British camp the envoy wrote as follows to a friend who had congratulated him on his honours. It would be

difficult to say that a feeling of misgiving was entirely absent from this letter.

PEIWAR KOTAL, *16th July* 1879.

. . . . . I have been most fortunate from first to last in the late campaign, and it has been a matter of gratification to me to observe the general satisfaction the settlement with the Amir has caused. Of course the moment Yakub Khan left his capital to come and negotiate, peace, in some form or other, was certain, but my object was to obtain what the Government wanted, and at the same time to make the Amir feel that he had been generously treated by us. He is, or pretends to be, very grateful to me personally, and I hope to work on this feeling after I get to Cabul. Of course there are difficulties to be contended with; the most prominent are but those every frontier officer has had to face, viz. fanatical attacks. The pessimist politicians are inclined to predict all sorts of evils to come, but I am sanguine they will prove to be false prophets, as they have been from the commencement of the war up to the signing of the treaty. . . . .

Sir Donald Stewart to Mrs Davies.

CANDAHAR, *13th August* 1879.

. . . . . I had a great compliment paid me yesterday by an uncle of the Amir, who was paying me a visit. When my likeness was pointed out on the wall, he said: "Ah! that is Kauffman!" and was greatly astonished when he was told it was from a photo of me done last year. When asked how old he thought me, he said "70 or 80, but perhaps only 70!" He clearly thought he was paying me a high compliment on my juvenile appearance when he put me at 70. . . . .

Sir Donald Stewart's striking personal appearance made a great impression upon the Afghans generally. Sir Frederick Cunningham, who served

in the political department in Cabul, says: "I well remember hearing how his manner and personality struck the Afghans and won their confidence. They admired his deep-set eyes and shaggy eyebrows, which they held betokened great wisdom." General Osborn Wilkinson writes:[1] "The Afghans had, as I was told by one who was intimate with him, a wholesome dread of his eyebrows, and all thought him 100 years old and full of wisdom."

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

CANDAHAR, 14*th August* 1879.

I am happy to say that cholera has almost disappeared since I last wrote to you. A few cases still occur at intervals, but the epidemic may be said to have passed away. . . . . A good many of the troops have actually marched for Peshin, and I am only now waiting for the carriage to send off the rest. Though the sun is still as powerful as ever almost about noon and in the afternoon, the nights are becoming very pleasant, and by the end of the month I hope we shall be able to march in comfort. Nothing has yet been told us of the relief, and I can form no plans till I get this information. . . . .

[1] In his published sketch of Sir Donald Stewart.

CHAPTER XIX

BAD NEWS FROM CABUL.

EARLY in September, the grievous news of the massacre[1] of Sir Louis Cavagnari, and of the officers and men of his mission reached Candahar. Sher Ali Khan, the Governor, when informed of what had happened, expressed the strongest desire to co-operate loyally with General Stewart, and offered to raise a contingent to march with the English force to Cabul, should such a movement be contemplated. He declared that he had a strong personal following who, like him, were entirely at the service of the British Government. On the 8th September Sher Ali Khan was visited by General Stewart. The Sirdar avowed his complete submission to the order of the General, who said in reply that he wished to leave entire control over the province in his hands, and would not interfere except in the last instance—to support the Sirdar's authority or prevent disturbances.

Meanwhile General Roberts, who was at Simla on the Army Commission, started, within twenty-four hours of the receipt of the news of the massacre, for the Peiwar Kotal, and eventually on the 12th October, as described by Lord Lytton, "made his triumphal entry into Cabul at the head of as fine a force as was ever put in the field—after having given

[1] On the 3rd September at Cabul.

the Afghans a severe thrashing at Charasia, and captured two of their standards and 150 of their guns." The same morning the Amir walked to General Roberts' camp and expressed his determination to resign the Amirship. This he was afterwards permitted to do, and he left Cabul for India on the 1st December, General Roberts and his army remaining in possession of the city.

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

CANDAHAR, *7th September* 1879.

This dreadful news from Cabul has upset all our plans, and I have now to stand fast here with all my force. The Amir has asked for assistance to put down the revolt of his own troops, and Bobs starts at once for Cabul with all the troops that can be pushed on from Kuram and the Khyber. What a sad ending to the Afghan triumph! I have always been afraid that Yakub's power was doubtful, and the Government had entertained the same sentiments; but no one imagined that it would collapse at his capital as it has done. It shows how rotten the Afghan power really is—and yet we must prop it up, for we are not prepared to annex the country. How the advocates of the Lawrence policy will crow! At the same time this catastrophe does not prove that they were right. It simply shows that we were rather rash in sending our envoy to Cabul before the Amir's power was fully established. It is too sad altogether. . . . .

Hills is going to ride straight to Peshawur to join the troops going to Cabul. He says he will be in Peshawur in twelve days, and I really think he will do it, though it is a fearful trip at this season owing to the great heat in Sind. . . . .

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

CANDAHAR, *15th September* 1879.

. . . . . The evidence against the Amir is growing stronger, but I am still disposed to think the proceedings

at Cabul are not influenced by him, though he must eventually be made responsible for them. When Roberts was ordered to move on Cabul, he was supposed to go there at the call of the Amir; and it would now appear that the tribes are being supplied with arms from Cabul in view to their stopping Roberts' advance. Yakub can't disguise matters much longer. Whatever happens, it is clear that he is not fit to keep the country together, and our idea of a strong central Government seems very hopeless. We don't want to keep the country ourselves, and we cannot leave it to its own devices. . . . . Whatever happens, we shall never be able to trust Yakub again. If he had not the power to save the Embassy himself, he can be of no use to us as an ally. . . . . I should not like to be in Lord Lytton's shoes just now. How his opponents will shriek and howl against him and his policy! . . . . An order has come to send a demonstration to Kelat from this. It is evidently not meant to go beyond that place, but when our troops move, it is hard to say where they may go to. . . . .

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

CANDAHAR, 22*nd September* 1879.

. . . . . I am very busy to-day sending away a column to threaten Ghuzni while Bobs is moving on Cabul. The column was to have started this morning, but at the last moment the Commander-in-Chief ordered me to send a couple of heavy guns with it, and thus it will be practically useless, as these guns cannot leave for five days. . . . . The Governor has thrown in with us here cordially, and has almost openly declared against Yakub. I fancy he is playing his own game, but as it suits us either way, I am quite indifferent whether Yakub goes to the wall or is propped up again. For the Governor's own sake, however, I advise him to act as if he were working solely in the interests of the Amir. . . . .

Sir Donald Stewart to Mrs Davies.

CANDAHAR, *22nd September* 1879.

. . . . . It is impossible to say what will be the outcome of the Cabul massacre; but there can be no doubt that Cabul itself must be occupied till a satisfactory settlement has been made. What that settlement is to be the Government probably cannot say at present. For my own part, I am at a loss; for we can never trust again to Yakub's power, and if he is put aside, there is no one to take his place that would have a stronger hold over the people of the country. Anything like a strong central Government seems out of the question, and a *protégé* of ours would have neither prestige nor supporters. . . . . We shall not be able to form any useful opinion or make forecasts till the troops are in possession of Cabul. The question is surrounded by difficulties; there is a grave suspicion that Yakub might have interfered to save the Embassy if he had been very anxious to do so. The members of his family here don't believe in him; they have all along asserted that he could retain his power only with our support. It must be a terrible blow to the Viceroy. . . . . I am sending a column up towards Ghuzni, and it would have started to-morrow had not the Commander-in-Chief insisted on heavy guns going with it, which will ensure its being absolutely useless, as no one can suppose that the Afghans will come out into the open to fight us on the high road! I daresay they think that they know the country better than I do. . . . .

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

CANDAHAR, *27th September* 1879.

. . . . . Just after all arrangements had been made for sending a reconnoitring column to Kelat-i-Ghilzai, the Chief changed the character of the operation, and now wants to arrange for a force being detached to Ghuzni. In one case we can manage to supply the detached Brigade

through the winter, but Ghuzni is too far off, and we have not the means of insuring its supply at such a distance, with our reduced transport. . . . I heard from Bobs some days ago that Hills had arrived at his camp at Ali Khel on the 23rd; very good going, as he only left this on the evening of the 8th, and had to ride all the way to Sukkur, a distance of 404 miles, which he did in five days. . . . .

28th September.

. . . . . Last night the Governor here gave me some private letters to read which arrived yesterday from Cabul. They were from a Sirdar, who went away from this with Nawab Gholam Hussun Khan, and contain hints of the real causes of the Cabul outbreak. The writers beg the Governor to burn their letters when read, as these were very dangerous times! and the first thing their friend does is to hand their letters over to me. So much for Afghan honour. It appears the Amir was not really implicated, and it is now alleged that the mutinous troops when they first went to the Residency had no idea of attacking it, and this seems confirmed by the fact that they were then *unarmed.* However, on reaching the Residency in an excited and tumultuous manner, they were received with a volley from the Resident's guard, who, we now learn, fired on the crowd without orders. The Afghans then rushed to the Arsenal and armed themselves, and then they were beyond control. This looks like the truth; but the worst of it is that the instigators were the confidential advisers of the Amir, and it is not easy to disconnect him with the proceedings of the mutineers, seeing he did so little to put down the tumult. The real instigator is the Mustauphi Habibullah, who is now in Bobs' camp. This is the opinion of the Afghans, who ought to know the truth, but it will probably be impossible to establish the Mustauphi's guilt. It is fortunate that we are here, as I do not believe the Government has as good means of getting at the truth as we have, with a man like the Governor, who would betray his own brother if it would benefit himself. . . . .

On the way from Peshawur to Cabul. *From a Photograph by* Mr F. St John Gore. [*To face p.* 288.

Sir Donald Stewart to Mrs Davies.

CANDAHAR, *28th September* 1879.

. . . . . The Amir appears to have bolted into our camp for protection. This does not look well for him, though it goes to prove his innocence as regards the massacre at Cabul. It is a bad business. I cannot see my way out of the muddle. . . . .

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

CANDAHAR, *6th October* 1879.

. . . . . There is not much going on here; there is a lull all over the country, and we are looking for a report of Bobs' proceedings at Cabul. He will certainly be there to-day, if he did not arrive yesterday. The Amir, who is in his camp, seemed to think our advance would lead to a general massacre of his family and of the families of his adherents, but I can hardly think the soldiers are such brutes. They have started the Sukkur-Dadur Railway, and Sir R. Temple[1] informs me it will be open for traffic by the middle of February. It will be a most creditable feat if this promise is fulfilled. Several sensational telegrams about the wonderful things being done by Temple are published in the Bombay papers, which say that my name will go down to posterity as "the slayer of camels." It is a good thing to be known to posterity at all, so I am quite contented that I am not stigmatised as "a slayer of men." . . . . .

By last mail I got a letter from Lord Strathnairn, enclosing a copy of his speech in the House of Lords on the 12th August last, in which he praises Bobs and myself for our services in Afghanistan, and he does so mainly because we served on his Staff in India, where we had given him valuable assistance. The old boy was very complimentary, but he unfortunately sent me the private letter intended for Bobs. I suppose mine was put into

[1] Sir Richard Temple, then Governor of Bombay.

the cover addressed to Bobs, and will reach me in time. The Lords must have been rather astonished, though, at his lugging in our names into a speech which was really on the subject of Regimental Workshops and Savings Banks. It however showed good feeling on his part, as he did not know the vote of thanks was to be made that night, and he did not reach the House till it was all over.[1] . . . .

[1] Lord Strathnairn rose to move for "copies of correspondence between the Commander-in-Chief in India, the Government of India, and the War Department, in 1864 and 1865, with reference to the system of workshops, and their approval of the same; also, of any correspondence regarding the good effects of the workshop system on the discipline of the British Army in India; and for returns of the amounts of money invested in the Soldiers' Savings Bank for three years preceding and three years following the institution of the workshops." He said that the system of Army workshops, the papers relating to which he solicited with their Lordships' permission, was most useful in respect of the efficiency, health, and discipline of the Army in India. He begged to take that opportunity to offer his excuses for having been absent when, more than at any time, he should have wished to have been present at the Vote of Thanks to the Army in India for their late brilliant and important services in Afghanistan; but he came to the House too late, in consequence of not having received the notice of the vote of thanks. He regretted it the more because two of the General Officers, Sir Donald Stewart and Sir Frederick Roberts, whose good fortune it was to be most engaged, were on his General Staff when Commander-in-Chief in India. It was impossible to speak too highly of their merits as officers, and of the very valuable assistance they rendered him while serving on his Staff. Nothing in a strategical point of view could be better than the very able manner in which Sir Donald Stewart, overcoming remarkable obstacles, made the turning movement from the line of the Indus, captured Candahar, and threatened Cabul, or the bold attack made by Sir Frederick Roberts on the most difficult pass of the Peiwar and its capture, effected by a most gallant and successful assault on the strong stockaded positions on its left; and when the positions which were protected by them were found to be impregnable, by a third and unyielding attack cut off the enemy's retreat, and made Sir Frederick Roberts master of this most important position. The native troops by their devoted bravery divided the laurels won in Afghanistan by their gallant British companions in arms. He begged to tender his sincere congratulations to Her Majesty's Government for having made safe India's weak point, and for having converted a doubtful and dangerous neighbour into a good friend.

Sir Donald Stewart to Mrs Davies.

CANDAHAR *9th October* 1879.

. . . . . You will have all the Cabul telegrams before they reach me. My impression is that the Amir's troops will have had enough of fighting at Charasia, and that they will not remain in the City, but will disperse. This would be the worst thing that could happen, as it would be some comfort to know that the scoundrels who are responsible for the attack on the Residency had got their deserts. But it is all a dreadful muddle, and I cannot think what is to come of it. It will be a great misfortune if we are compelled to hold more of the country than we want for our own security. It is an exceedingly poor country, and the people are the greatest scoundrels in creation. They are destitute of every virtue, patriotism included. They have pleasant manners, and seem manly and open in their speech; but even in these they are impostors and humbugs. We are all most anxious for news from Cabul, and manage to get it pretty regularly, but, of course, in rather meagre form. . . . . Here we are dull to a degree. Everybody is disappointed at not getting away from Afghanistan; but we are settling down for the winter.

The Viceroy has a very difficult card to play, and I cannot see how our ends are to be gained without holding the greater part of the country, and that is a course which will not be agreeable to us in any shape. I have heard from Bobs that Hills has been appointed Military Governor of Cabul. This is great news to us all, as Hills was eating his heart out at having nothing to do. He is just the man for the Cabulese, and will keep them in right good order. . .

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

CANDAHAR, 19*th October* 1879.

Yesterday I received a telegram from the Foreign Office, which shows that our occupation of this province may be considered permanent. I suppose this is unavoidable, but I am very sorry for it, as the country won't pay its expenses, and it will give us infinite trouble to administer. I don't understand the matter yet, as the telegrams from home seem to imply that annexation is not contemplated. . . . Hills has tumbled on his legs at last. Bobs has made him Military Governor of Cabul, which will give him employment at any rate. The Amir wishes to abdicate, and I fancy he will be allowed to do so as we cannot force him to continue in a position which is more than a false one. I am afraid the Government is blamable for making terms with a man who is known to be weak-minded, and it is more than likely that Cavagnari's sanguine temperament and rosy reports blinded the authorities and made them fall in with the settlement, which would unquestionably have been most successful if it had not failed at the first strain. I do not like the new proposals a bit, and yet I shall be saddled with the working of them. If my advice is taken, we should leave the civil administration in the hands of native governors acting on the advice of political officers. This will give employment to a number of the ruling classes, who will be against us to a man if we introduce British rule into the country, together with our codes of law, which are wholly unsuited to the habits and ideas of the people. The question is a most serious one, and Government seems determined to retain their hold on the country at all hazards. . . . I am in a quandary about affairs here. They want me to undertake the Government of the whole of Afghanistan, but they give me no assistance. Roberts has five Staff Officers to my one, and he has some seven or eight political assistants while they give me two. I don't mind this, as we get through our work well, and this

is all I care about; but if I ask for pay for an officer there is at once a general howl. . . . . I am pretty patient, but, I suppose, a worm will turn at last. Everything is very quiet here. The country is no doubt more open than in the north, and the people know that they cannot escape me if they are troublesome; at the same time I think our arrangements are good. We never give the people a chance of cutting up small parties, and our prestige is therefore pretty well established. . . . .

Sir Donald Stewart to Mrs Davies.

CANDAHAR, 24*th October* 1879.

. . . . . You know, I daresay, that we are fixtures here for good. The proclamation is now being deciphered by Protheroe. I am to hold supreme authority, though Sher Ali will be the civil administrator under me. The prospect is, between ourselves, one that I do not covet, but of course, while I am in active employ, I shall do my best. . . . . The climate just now is simply perfect, but the dulness and monotony of the life are a little depressing. I am lucky in having occupation which engrosses my whole time; if it were not for this, I should be miserable indeed. Every one is living, more or less, in discomfort, and those who have families in India don't like being separated from them for an indefinite time. . . . .

We have not once had our telegraph line cut; our main difficulty is to protect ourselves from thieves. They are the boldest rascals in the world. Some men got into my garden through a drain a few days ago, and carried off all my Durbar carpets, about 400 rupees' worth. I can recover the value from the villages near; but that is not my object. I want to catch the thieves. I daresay they are the same men who cleared out St John, as they came in at the same hole. We had a guard over the hole for a long time, but of course no one came. . . . .

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

CANDAHAR, 25*th October* 1879.

I find the longer we stay here, the less I have to write about. All the excitement is over now, and we have only to work out as patiently as we can the policy of the Government. Here we are leaving details of the civil Government in the hands of the Sirdar Sher Ali, but my authority over all is to be recognised and acted upon. Practically we have annexed the country. I daresay the term annexation will be softened a little to suit the home tastes, but in point of fact we have determined to keep the greater part of Afghanistan under our direct rule. I can't say what is to be done with Herat, but the whole of Southern Afghanistan to the borders of Herat in one direction, and the border of Ghuzni, is placed under my control. I cannot say that I like the arrangement so far as I understand it, but I hope that it will be open to us at some future time to retire to Peshin, the Afghan provinces being ruled by their own chiefs, under our supremacy, as our feudatories. An arrangement of this kind would work well enough, I think, but I daresay it will be necessary to keep military possession of the country for some years till the people have learned to acknowledge our rule unquestioned. In this part of the country our rule will be accepted by the mass of the people with pleasure. Of course the ruling classes will not in their hearts like the transfer, but they are without power, and distrust each other to such a degree that they are incapable of mischief. A clever old lady, the widow of Kohundil Khan,[1] eighty-four years of age, told me long ago that Yakub was useless and could not maintain himself without our assistance, and as for Sher Ali, the Governor of this place, she said he was like wax; we might make an elephant or a horse or even a donkey of him, he would do exactly what

[1] One of the celebrated Candahar Sirdars of the Amir Dost Mahomed's time.

he was told. Practically I find the old lady's opinion is true, for Sher Ali is our most obedient servant. Of course it does not do to trust an Afghan further than you can see him; but as his interests are ours, I can trust him to some extent. . . . .

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

CANDAHAR, 31*st October* 1879.

. . . . . I have been directed to issue a proclamation taking over the government of the Provinces in consequence of the abdication of the Amir. I have already told you that Sher Ali will carry on the civil administration under my control. The outside world seem to think the Governor is a dangerous man, and not to be depended on. I trust him about as far as I can see him; but I know his strength and weakness, and he knows that he could not hold his own here for a month without support. . . . . You would enjoy this climate—bitter cold with bright sun and no wind or dampness; it is certainly perfect just now. There are picnics every day of some sort, *i.e.* the officers take their men to the river, on the banks of which they eat their dinner, and the men amuse themselves with fishing and shooting. They all like the fun, as it takes them out of barracks and gives them something to talk about. To-morrow the Padre and Farmer go out with the Escort Company for the purpose of digging turf for the edges of the garden walks. The men delight in this sort of thing, and the Padre works away with the best of them. I should like to join them, but I can't spare the day. It is lucky I have not a gun here as I am sure I should neglect my work, for the shooting is very good. . . . .

Sir Donald Stewart to Mrs Davies.

CANDAHAR, 31*st October* 1879.

. . . . . There was a little fight at Kelat, or near Kelat, a few days ago. It was fairly well managed; but if the officers in command had restrained their fire a little longer the

effect would have been better. However, the affair was a success, though Captain Sartorius of the 59th Foot was badly cut in both hands, and Captain Browne of the 2nd Bengal Cavalry had a sabre wound in his head, which is troubling him. The soldiers enjoyed the fun amazingly, and say they would not mind remaining in the country if they could get a little of that sort of thing to relieve the monotony. . . . .

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

CANDAHAR, 10*th November* 1879.

. . . . . Yesterday I went out for a little change to the Argandab valley, about 12 miles off. We had our lunch there under the trees and returned in the evening. It was a charming day, and I was glad to get away from my desk even for one day.

. . . . . One of the Sirdars who went up to Cabul, and arrived there a few days after the massacre, has just returned and has been giving me an account of matters there. He says Yakub had no direct hand in the affair, but that he could have saved the Embassy if he had shown a particle of pluck or a real desire to assist the officers. The people who stirred up the troops thought they would frighten the Amir and Cavagnari into giving them what they wanted, and when the blood of the people was up, there was no stopping the assault on the Residency. *Here,* the Sirdars always asserted that Yakub was not a man of resolution and firmness of character, and that he never was fit to rule the Afghans. My informant says a Kohistan noble offered to bring 20,000 men from his own country, and kill every man connected with the massacre; and all he got for his pains was the loss of his own life. He was quietly murdered as a dangerous character! Really, the Afghans are such wretches that one has no satisfaction in doing any of them a kindness. The Governor here is now my humble servant, and is always praying for my long life and happiness, but the day will come no doubt when he would like to get rid of me or of whoever is in my shoes.

Had he not been here when the Cabul business occurred, he would never have been Governor, and he and his family would have been simply dependent on our bounty, and would never have got the position they now hold. . . . .

11th November 1879.

. . . . . If Donnie[1] is at Aberdeen when this reaches you, I hope he will find out my old friends, the Blacks;[2] they were most kind to me when I was a schoolboy. I fancy their son, General Black, late of the Bombay Army, lives with them. . . . .

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

CANDAHAR, *21st November* 1879.

. . . . . Protheroe left me yesterday, and our sociable little party is being gradually broken up. . . . . The Company of the 60th, who have been with me now for a year, are very sore at being relieved; but it could not be helped as there is only a young subaltern left with it. I am sorry to lose them too. St John will be going away, and there will be only Chapman and myself of the original Staff left. Nothing has as yet been settled about the disposal of this country, but our difficulties here are small, and everybody has shelter. The chief difficulty at Cabul will be forage for horses and transport animals. We are not as well off in that respect as we could wish, but we are not likely to be put to the straits they will have to face at Cabul. There has been an extraordinary change in the weather during the last three or four days, and I am now sitting in my warmest clothes, with my ulster on, and a fire at my back and a bright sun shining into the middle of the room; the thermometer on my table is 52°. Instead of going out for a ride at five as I used to do last week, I have to start at half-past three, and be home by five. Fortunately, I am well provided with everything except warm socks, and these a soldier of the 60th is going to knit for me, if he can get the wool. I see the people at home have very little

[1] His second son. [2] See letter to Mrs Black on p. 9.

idea of what is doing here, and the newspapers will be startled when they find out what the settlement is. Everybody seems to have a dread of Herat being given up to Persia, yet that is the very thing I am strongly advocating. It would be a long story to explain the ground on which I advocate this question, but the gist of the matter is that, as we cannot hold Herat ourselves, the next best thing is to give it to some one who will keep Russia out, and this Persia is more likely to do than any semi-independent ruler, who could not hold his own against the intrigues of either Persia or Russia. This is briefly my idea of the situation in Herat. Turkestan is a different matter, and I think the best thing we could do would be to come to a distinct understanding with Russia regarding it. But I fear our shilly-shally Government has not the pluck to do this, because they can never be sure that they will be supported by public opinion at home. I suppose St John will be going away next, and he will be an exceedingly difficult man to replace. There are few men who know anything about the politics of this part of the world, and I shall miss him on that account very much. Fortunately he leaves me a very useful Persian gentleman, of Indian extraction—indeed a brother of the Nawab of Masulipatam in Madras, but born and bred in Persia. This native gentleman[1] has been in England, and is more like an Englishman in habits and ideas than a native; he is Political Assistant here, and acts as interpreter, and I don't know what I should do without him. The winter is now fairly on us, and the mercury falls every night to from 15 to 17 degrees below freezing-point. I have started a fire in my bedroom, and use it morning and evening. The sun shines into the middle of the office room, and we are still able to keep the windows open as there is no wind; in fact, the climate is now perfect.

. . . . . It is strange how every one longs to get away. So long as there is any excitement officers and men are happy enough, but they are all sick of idleness and want

[1] His name was Nawab Husain Ali Khan.

of society. I am as sick as any one can be of it, but I have fortunately little time to think about such things, and that keeps me going. At the same time, I often think I should like a snug fireside at home, with a good dinner nicely served in prospect. You know I am not very particular about my food, but I am a little tired of iron plates and cups, and the same old dishes come round with monotonous regularity. I had a letter from Temple telling me how much he enjoyed his visit here. He certainly poked his nose into everything and every place; and I hope he will report what he saw, because much good work has been done here, and I don't think we get much credit for it. I am thankful to the Government for letting me alone, but I should like them to show some little interest in what we are doing. They are very much absorbed with Cabul affairs at present, but the time will come when Candahar will play a far more important part in Central Asian politics than Cabul. This is the only line by which an army can attack India, and it is from here that the Russian game must be watched. I must now go and see the wounded officers, Captain Sartorius and Browne. The latter is nearly well; the former is utterly helpless, both hands being disabled, but the Doctors say he will recover their use in time. He does not like his fingers being bent; you will probably remember the sensation.[1]

I have recommended Sartorius for the V.C.[2]

Sir Donald Stewart to General Lumsden.

CANDAHAR, 26*th November* 1879.

You will not be surprised to hear that the *Afghan Gazette* has raised howls of indignation in these parts.

Before taking any official action in the matter, I want you to tell me, *if you can*, the principle on which the Brevets have been granted as well as the Decorations.

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[1] Referring to an accident which had happened to Lady Stewart.

[2] The recommendation was approved.

It would seem that these rewards have been confined to the few officers of this Force who have been under fire. If that be so, then I and several others have been most improperly rewarded for our supposed services. I don't grudge rewards to men who have done good work according to their opportunities, but I think if rewards are given to selected men, my opinions should have been asked for, even if they were not allowed any weight. Of course I know that everybody cannot be satisfied, but probably you will admit that the selections should be representatives whose promotion would be considered generally fair and deserved by the troops, and in this respect I might surely have been expected to give an opinion. As a well-wisher of the Army, I ask your advice in this matter, as there are a few men here who have claims which I think ought to be pressed, and I shall be very grateful to you if you will give me your ideas on the subject frankly. Comparisons are odious, but you know officers will draw them, and though we have had little excitement in the fighting line, the work done by the troops here will not compare unfavourably with that done in the North, where the light has not been placed under a bushel. I know all the difficulties that encompass those who have the settlement of these things, nevertheless I feel bound to do all in my power to rectify any omissions that may have taken place, and it is in this spirit that I appeal to you. . . . .

This was the last letter written at this time by Sir Donald Stewart to General Lumsden. The latter officer soon afterwards, on the expiry of his term as Adjutant-General, proceeded on leave to England.

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

CANDAHAR, *7th December* 1879.

. . . . . There is a good deal of excitement here in consequence of the reports coming from Herat. Ayub Khan,[1]

[1] The younger brother of the Amir Yakub Khan.

the Governor of Herat, has certainly told the Persians that he and his troops are going to drive us out of Candahar. But we have not yet heard of his actual departure from that place. My force is not so strong as I should like, but I think we could give a good account of anything Herat is likely to bring against us. A nice fight in the open against a regular enemy two or three times our strength would be a capital ending to our active service. . . . .

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

CANDAHAR, 15*th December* 1879.

. . . . . Those wretched troops at Herat, on whose action we have been looking for honour and glory, seem to have begun cutting each others' throats. The news by Teheran is that they have fought among themselves, and made a prisoner of Ayub. The Herat part of the force, which was the weakest, has gone to the wall, and the City is now in possession of the victors—the Cabul regiment. It is not likely under these circumstances that they will come this way now; it is more likely that they will break up and disperse to their homes. . . . .

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

CANDAHAR, 24*th December* 1879.

. . . . . There has been great excitement this morning, owing to four or five men, headed by an Afghan gentleman, who has been about Candahar ever since we came here, and who actually had on his body when killed a paper signed by St John permitting him to carry arms. He evidently sallied out of the City this morning intent on killing somebody. He looked at St John, who was walking about the place followed by three chuprassis, one of whom was carrying his gun, but not liking his appearance apparently, he went off and came upon an officer alone, whom the party at once attacked. The long and the short of it is, that three of the four men have been cut down and

captured, and some thirty sowars are after the fourth man, who will, I hope, be captured too; but we want to get information as to the object of the attack. Two of the leader's uncles have regularly attended my weekly durbar, during the time we have been at Candahar, and his turning Ghazi is most inexplicable. One of his uncles too is Sher Ali's right-hand man, so it is altogether a mysterious business. I suppose we shall find out the real facts as the man is so well known here. . . . . I got telegrams from India yesterday, saying that all the Bengal Native Troops are to be relieved from here shortly by Bombay Regiments. They don't say a word about me, but I presume I shall be relieved too. The telegrams on the subject are very hazy, as they say when the first parts of the relieving troops arrive in Peshin, the Bengal regiments may be brought on to Candahar! This is certainly not the nearest road from Quetta to India.[1] . . . . Before I was out of bed yesterday, the band of the 59th came to serenade me, and sang the Christmas hymn very well indeed. . . . . Warneford had a great service in the new Chapel, which has been made very smart, in the barracks. We had one of the Port Blair anthems, "How beautiful upon the mountains," etc., by the band of the 60th, and two little boys sang the solos very nicely. . . . .

[1] General Stewart did not know at this time that an order for the march of his division from Candahar to Cabul was about to be issued.

North Gate of Candahar. [*To face p.* 302.

CHAPTER XX

LAST DAYS IN CANDAHAR

FROM the 1st January 1880 Sir Donald Stewart kept a very brief diary, in which he made regular entries during the following eight or nine months, a period which may be fairly regarded as the most important of his life. We thus have, in addition to letters, an authentic daily record of the closing portion of the Candahar command—of the great march from Candahar to Cabul (during the progress of which the battle of Ahmud Khel was fought, and the fortress of Ghuzni occupied), of the assumption by Stewart of the supreme military command and political control in Afghanistan—of the communications with Sirdar Abdul Rahman which finally led to his Amirship—of the deputation of General Roberts with a carefully selected army of the highest efficiency to conquer Ayub Khan, and expel him and his forces from the Candahar country, and of the completely successful withdrawal from Afghanistan, under Stewart's immediate command, of the remainder of the British Army of occupation. The entries in the diary will form the basis of the story of these stirring events; but they will be illustrated by many extracts from letters both private and official.

Diary, 1st January 1880.—I held parade of the whole force in honour of the Empress. . . . . Much excitement in city owing to news from Cabul.

The last sentence refers to the great rising of the tribes which followed closely on the abdication of the Amir Yakub Khan, and the departure of himself and his principal ministers for India. "Throughout the districts round Cabul the Mullahs or religious teachers — headed by one influential and patriotic teacher (Muskh-i-Alam) proclaimed war against the infidel." Then occurred the collision in the Chardeh Valley, when a party of cavalry and horse artillery was unexpectedly attacked by overwhelming numbers and forced to retire upon the entrenchments at Sherpur. The arrival on the scene of General Roberts, the severe fighting which then took place, followed by the withdrawal of the whole of his force within the great walled enclosure which he had carefully fortified and provisioned beforehand at Sherpur—the final quelling of the insurrection, and the re-occupation of the city, form one of the most thrilling chapters in our military history. On the 26th December a conditional amnesty was proclaimed, and a few days later a native Governor, Sirdar Wali Mahomed, was placed in charge of the city and district of Cabul, martial law being declared to be at an end.

Diary, 2nd Jan.—The Sirdar[1] visited me yesterday, and, with the view of relieving his mind regarding his position, I told him my own ideas on the subject, without committing the Government in any way. He pressed me about Herat, but I could say nothing on that subject. . . . .

[1] *I.e.* Sirdar Sher Ali Khan, the Governor of Candahar.

3rd Jan. . . . . Great confusion at Herat. Cabulee and Heratee troops cutting each others' throats.

4th Jan.—Received orders to hold Bengal Division in readiness for a move, with a week's European rations and 12 days' native. No object specified nor direction of move.

5th Jan.—Wrote to Lyall[1] about the political arrangements of this place when we move. Went to sports this afternoon and gave away the prizes. Sirdar came for a time to the sports. . . . .

8th Jan.—Sher Ali is rather excited about the report respecting Abdul Rahman, and says it will, when known, cause excitement here.

Sirdar Abdul Rahman was at this time an exile from Afghanistan, living in Turkestan under Russian protection. He was the son of Mahomed Afzal Khan, the eldest son of the great Amir, Dost Mahomed Khan. Abdul Rahman was believed to be a man of much natural ability, and able to exercise influence over his countrymen. In the search for a possible successor to Yakub Khan, as ruler of Cabul, no more promising name presented itself to the British authorities. Every reference to him is fraught with interest, when it is borne in mind that, at the end of July of this year (1880), Abdul Rahman, with the approval of the British Government, established himself as Amir of Afghanistan and successfully maintained that position till his death in 1901.

Diary, *10th Jan.*—Received authority of Government last night to tell Sirdar what Government proposes to do about himself. . . . .

[1] The Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, now the Rt. Hon. Sir Alfred Lyall, G.C.I.E., K.C.B.

11*th Jan.*—Received orders from Quarter-Master General to submit scheme for going to Ghuzni and Cabul; replied at once and submitted details in letter. . . . .

13*th Jan.*—Sirdar paid me a long visit this afternoon and talked on various subjects, but always harping on Herat and other parts of the country. He seems ambitious of being made Amir.

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

CANDAHAR, 13*th January* 1880.

. . . . . We shall leave this with a handy little force of about 6500 men, all told. The Chief evidently thinks it too small, but I don't want a man more, even for the capture of Ghuzni if they will let me alone. I would rather have a mobile force of this number than be hampered by artillery, which is almost useless in this country. . . . .

Diary, 17*th Jan.*—Went to a picnic at Baba Wulli given by 25th N.I. The whole regiment was present, and we had all sorts of sports and amusements. The men seemed to enjoy the outing. Mahomed Jan, the celebrated robber and murderer, was killed this morning by Sirdar. I have caused Sirdar not to kill by disembowelling in future.

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

CANDAHAR, *January* 1880.

. . . . . No troops ever got on better than those of the Candahar force; the feeling between the Sepoys and the Europeans is everything that can be desired. . . . .

Diary, 1*st Feb.*—Heavy rain again last night, and the whole place a sea of mud. . . . .

2*nd Feb.*—Snow fell last night, and is now lying on the ground. Wrote to Adjutant-General about defences of Ghuzni, and as they are reported to be in a bad state, I have said that I am inclined to risk it with two 6.3 Howitzers for breaching purposes. . . . .

Sir Donald Stewart to Mrs Davies.

CANDAHAR, *3rd February* 1880.

I cannot let you leave India without a line to say good-bye, and wish you a pleasant voyage. I had hoped to have my home letters yesterday, but somehow all my letters and papers have gone astray for once, and I am a little put out, because this has not happened to me before, though it occurs occasionally to other people. I suppose my letters have been kept back on this occasion, to show that the Post-Office is no respecter of persons. Till yesterday we were luxuriating in real summer weather; but, at last, the winter has set in with a vengeance, and it has been snowing all day. We are lucky in being so low, for at Chumun there is three feet of snow, and it is still falling—what it is at Quetta and the Khojak I don't know, but the Bombay troops[1] coming up will know what winter means in this country. I have not yet heard who is to succeed me here, and I think it more than strange that they keep me in the dark. Of course it does not matter at all to me, but I should like to dispose of the returning troops in accordance with the wishes of the General who is to succeed me. If they do not tell me anything, I can only settle matters in my own way, without considering other people's wishes or feelings. I am, however, very sorry for Sher Ali,[2] as his affairs are becoming every day more important, and their settlement is largely dependent on a continuance of the line of policy on which I have worked from the first, and which has hitherto been so entirely successful. They are beginning to try the same system at Cabul, but I fear it is now too late to do much good. The Government should at once have put up a native Governor when Yakub abdicated; but I suppose they did not quite know what the policy of the Home Government would be, and so lost the opportunity.

[1] General Stewart's Division was about to be relieved by troops from Bombay.

[2] The Governor of Candahar.

I shall leave this place with very mixed feelings. I am interested in the establishment of Sher Ali's rule on a firm basis, and there is still a good deal to be done before that object can be considered secure: but, on the other hand, there is a chance of real service about Ghuzni, and the force is most anxious to have an opportunity of showing what it is made of. . . . It is not possible to have men more fit than the Candahar Division at this moment, and it will be a great disappointment to them if they lose this chance. . . . .

As for Bobs, I don't see how he is to get away. He must wait where he is till some sort of settlement of the country has been effected. Eventually we shall, no doubt, withdraw, perhaps to Jelalabad, but this will not be feasible for many a day to come, unless a really strong native ruler turns up. I don't envy any one the management of Cabul, and I am sure the only thing is to allow the people to settle their own affairs in their own way. It is not easy to keep aloof in such cases; but we should decline to interfere except in very rare emergencies. At this moment one of Sher Ali's Regiments has become mutinous, and Sher Ali would like me to interfere; but I tell him that a man who can't manage his own troops is hardly fit to govern a Kingdom. The poor man sees this, and says he could manage his men well enough if he had arms, etc. We are giving him arms; but meanwhile I have insisted on his dealing with his mutinous soldiers in his own way, because any interference from us would really injure his prestige with his own people. I think Candahar will come well out of the business, under any circumstances; but still I am sorry to have to leave before everything has been quite settled. . . . .

. . . . . My command has been in most ways a very satisfactory one. The regiments are good, and their conduct has been simply admirable. Every one has worked with a will to get the force comfortably housed, and many of us will look back to our stay here with no little feeling of regret. . . . .

Diary, 4th Feb.—Great frost last night, but weather bright and cheerful. Heard from Biscoe that the walls of Ghuzni have not been thoroughly repaired, and that there are only 6 six-pounders in the place, but not mounted. . . . .

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

CANDAHAR, *7th February* 1880.

To-day I received a telegram from Colonel Preston[1] asking me if I will accept the Madras Command, subject to any change that may ensue on the report of the Army Commission; and I have accepted the offer on these conditions, because I can always throw it up if things don't suit me. The offer is a compliment, and I could not give any reason for declining it at present. . . . .

We were looking for home letters of 9th January, which ought to be here to-morrow, but the snow has stopped the mails somewhere below Quetta. This sort of thing is to be expected just now, though it happens at a most unfortunate juncture, and while the relieving troops are on the move in the Bolan. I warned the Bombay Government against crowding so many animals into the Pass, but they would not take the warning, and they are losing men and cattle by death from sheer cold. It is rather amusing to hear the Bombay Commissariat officers. They all see the folly of what was done last year, and they don't quite like speaking out the truth themselves. They generally get me to say the disagreeable things, especially when the mistakes are made by their own Presidency. They are capital fellows and work very cordially with me; indeed they are not so prejudiced as the Bengal officers, and we get on famously. . . . . Protheroe, who is now at Jelalabad, gives a deplorable account of the state of affairs there; he says that Candahar is paradise compared with any place he has seen there. The troops are not hutted, and they are worried to death doing police work, which is performed here

[1] Military Secretary to the Commander-in-Chief.

by the people of the country. There is no doubt the people about the Khyber and along the road to Cabul are more hostile than they are here, but no steps have been taken to get their confidence, nor have we insisted on their head men being responsible for the conduct of their respective tribes. This was the very first thing I did. I sent for the Chiefs, and told them that I would put the road under their charge, that I would give them proper establishments, but that any misconduct would fall on the Chiefs. They made their proposals, and from that day to this I have not had any cause for complaint, barring the thefts about which I have already told you. Since the discovery of the thieves and their punishment, there has not been a pin's worth stolen in the country. The Khyber tribes are more difficult to deal with, because their country is more inaccessible than hereabouts; but, allowing for this, something might have been done, because an Afghan will do anything for money. The main difficulty has been in the Political Staff. All the officers in that department have been trained in a traditional frontier policy inaugurated by the Lawrences, and these traditions are held sacred by Punjab officials. From the first I determined to take up a line of my own, and that was to keep up the native Government, and work it entirely by the local officials, whom I never disturbed. I explained to them that we had no intention of taking their country from them, though I should appropriate the revenue so long as we remained in it. This, in a few words, is my policy, and as it strictly accorded with the public utterances of the Government of India, it has been regularly approved. Why the Government permitted a different system in Cabul I cannot understand. Bobs does his best with officers trained in another school, and they are trying to work a half-and-half system, which is certain to fail. They are trying to work our system through Wali Mahomed;[1] but instead of giving the Sirdar full power, as we do here, they have subjected him to all sorts of petty surveillance which no one could stand, and then they will say the poor

[1] The Native Governor of Cabul (see p. 304).

man is not fit. The Sirdar here has more than once tried to get assistance from me in the shape of troops for the purpose of coercing refractory subjects, but I have uniformly told him that a man who is fit to rule here, must trust to himself when his own subjects are concerned. From external enemies I shall protect and aid him, but I will not move a finger against an Afghan. Seeing that I am resolute on this point, he does not now trouble me; but if I once took part in their internal squabbles, I should lose my prestige as a friend of the nation, and be looked on as a mere partisan of the Sirdar's. By taking up this position, and sticking to it under all circumstances, the people are beginning to believe in me. They could not for a long time understand my ways, and I daresay they thought me a very deep schemer; but when they find I am consistent, I shall have my reward in their goodwill, for I have always thought as much of the people as of the aims of Government, the interests of both being really identical. . . . . Some of the Ghilzais[1] have been talking big, and saying they are going to kick up a row, etc., etc., but nothing has come of it except talk. I have told them that I will destroy all their villages if they attack Kelat, and as I shall be marching that way soon and they know it too, I do not think they will move. Notwithstanding this, the papers talk as if we had no hold on Afghanistan. If people will look at the map, they will see we have the greater part of the country in our hands. Because we do not telegraph daily what we are doing, no one takes any notice of us. . . . . It is a queer world, and this sort of thing has its value; every little scrimmage is magnified into a battle, and we become the laughing-stock of Europe owing to our own folly. . . . .

11*th Feb.*—Yesterday the Viceroy congratulated me on getting the Madras Command, and "hoped I should get something better" if that were abolished. They have not yet told me who is to succeed me here. I have got my orders to move on to Ghuzni, so that is all right. . . . .

[1] The most powerful of the Afghan tribes, spread over the country from Candahar to Ghuzni.

Diary, 8th Feb.—. . . . . Brief copy of Queen's Speech arrived—very meagre and unsatisfactory.

13th Feb.—Sent the latest news from Ghuzni to General Greaves.[1] Eight 6-pounder guns there without horses, harness, or ammunition. There are three regiments of three or four companies each in the Fort with Tahir Mahomed and Musa Khan,[2] but only partially armed. No gathering of the tribes about Ghuzni. Cold, and snowing all day. . . . .

16th Feb.—The Sirdar visited me to-day, and referred to his position now and in the future. I explained to him again that his authority was not likely to extend beyond Candahar, Kelat, and Furrah, but that if he had anything to represent, a fresh opportunity would be afforded him. . . . .

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

CANDAHAR, *17th February* 1880.

. . . . . We have had nothing but snow and biting winds for the last week. Fortunately the season has now so far advanced that snow cannot lie long on the ground, and we shall shortly have fine weather for our march on Ghuzni. My only anxiety is about camels, because a large number of those I have now will be lost in bringing up the relieving regiments of the Bombay Army who are to take our places here. I have promised to move from this on the 15th March, and I must keep my word if possible. The latest news from Ghuzni is to the effect that the Afghans will evacuate the place and take to the hills. This will be a great disappointment to the troops, who want to have a "go in" at them; and Hichens proposes to send an officer up to Ghuzni to put the Fort into a defensible condition for Mahomed Jan, in order that we may have an opportunity of knocking it about his ears in proper form! . . . .

A telegram has this moment arrived, saying that the

[1] Who had succeeded General Lumsden as Adjutant-General.

[2] A young boy, son of the late Amir Yakub Khan.

Persians are receding from the negotiations about Herat under some strong pressure. This can only come from Russia, and if they continue this game, we shall be compelled to go to Herat after all. The idea is anything but a pleasant one, and I do not know what to think of it. . . . . I must say the people who said that when once we gave up our own frontier, there was no telling where we are to stop, seem to have prophesied rightly. . . . . It may be that the Persians are only talking about terms, and may yet come round, but I can't say that I like the look of things at all. The Opposition and enemies of the Government will chuckle over this, but that won't help us out of the fix; in fact, the new phase of affairs is so startling that I hardly know what to think of it. . . . .

19th February.

After we had made all our preparations to move on Ghuzni, I received a message from Calcutta not to move without further orders, as our operations were part of the general scheme. . . . . I have also to-day received intelligence of the collapse of our negotiations with Persia. We have been trying to get too much out of Persia, and have consequently overreached ourselves. It is a miserable business, and I don't know who is to blame; but I have told them my opinion pretty freely, and I have advised them not to screw harsh conditions out of the Persians, as they would unquestionably evade them. The Government has now asked me what my views are, without giving me a hint of their own. This is hardly fair, but on one point I am quite clear, that we cannot occupy Herat ourselves, and that it would be safer in Persian hands than in those of a petty independent ruler who would always be subject to intrigues from the side of Russia. . . . .

Diary, 21st Feb.—Bishop of Lahore[1] arrived last night; he looks very seedy, and is hardly fit for a journey of this sort. . . . .

22nd Feb.—Went to morning service and Communion; Bishop gave an address to the men on parade.

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[1] Dr T. Valpy French, the first Bishop of Lahore.

News received of further row at Herat, in which the Cabul Regiments have got the worst of it.

24th Feb.—. . . . Bishop going to ride with me to Argandab.

26th Feb.—. . . . The Sirdar is to visit me to-day, and we are to discuss matters connected with my departure. He is anxious to go to Ghuzni and I have recommended it.

28th Feb.—Weather has become much milder during the last day or two, and winter seems to have ended. Captain Graves, R.A., slightly stabbed by an Afghan in the Bazaar this afternoon by a shoemaker's awl.

29th Feb.—. . . . Dr Maccartie, 2nd P. C., shot through the shoulder this afternoon near Gold Mine. He was alone.

1st March.—Bishop of Lahore started for India to-day. Chapman took him beyond the city. . . . . Sirdar is much vexed about officers going about alone unarmed, as he thinks; ordered the boy who stabbed Graves to be publicly flogged in Bazaar. . . . .

3rd March.—Inspected the Cavalry Brigade this morning, and found every Regiment differently equipped, and no uniformity in loading of the ponies, Colonel ——, as usual, doing everything differently to his neighbour. Ordered Ghazi boys to be sent to Kurrachee, and recommended Government to send them to the Andamans for life.

4th March.—Government does not wish Sirdar to move so far as Ghuzni, as it might cut across Cabul political arrangements and his presence might be required on the Helmund. . . . .

8th March.—. . . . Robberies have commenced again, and it is said that it is some of Mahomed Jan's (the robber)[1] men out of revenge. . . . .

9th March.—General Phayre[2] arrived here this morning looking very well and strong. . . . . There is a small

[1] See Diary of 13th January, p. 306.

[2] Of the Bombay Army.

disturbance in Zemindawar, and the Sirdar is sending off a regiment to look up the disturber of the peace there.

10*th March.*—General Phayre and officers of 1st Grenadiers dined with us last evening, a very pleasant party. News arrived to-day of break-up of negotiations with Persia about Herat. A message to be sent to Abdul Rahman through his family, to the effect that if he desires to communicate with British he should lose no time in doing so to Cabul.[1] This message shall be sent through his wife here. . . . .

11*th March.* . . . . Sent a message to Abdul Rahman through a confidential of his, a resident of Delhi, strange to say. Parliament is to be dissolved after Easter.

15*th March.*—Had many visitors to-day, and constant interruption from officers of new regiments. There is to be a Durbar to-day, at which I propose to address the moollahs and others, who are to attend it, about the attacks made against our soldiers and followers. Storm of wind and dust last night, but no rain. Rain much wanted for crops. . . .

A long speech to moollahs and city people.

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

CANDAHAR, 16*th March* 1880.

. . . . . General Primrose is to succeed me here, and leaves Bombay to-day. He is not to have political authority. St John remains here in independent political charge. The arrangement is a very good one, as General Primrose knows nothing of what has been done here, and he could hardly carry out my policy without understanding it. St John, on the other hand, has worked with me from the first, and the Government has adopted all my resolutions in the bulk. He (Primrose) is bringing up presents for the Sirdar, and I fancy there will be a grand blow-off here when we make them over to him. I have taken a great liking to Sher Ali, and I am naturally anxious to see our arrange-

[1] *I.e.* that Abdul Rahman should communicate with the authorities at Cabul.

ments with him consolidated and successful. A great many of the people about him hate us, specially his own brother, who is a bigoted fanatic, and who would ruin the Sirdar if he followed his advice. Then some of the ladies of the family are very much against us, and do all they can to put him against us; they must be a queer lot. The day the Sirdar gave Temple and me a breakfast, the ladies were looking on through screens. I did not notice them; some of the guests saw them. It seems one of the Sirdar's wives noticed a very good-looking Persian lad, a servant of the Nawab's (our interpreter), and some time afterwards sent a servant to try and procure an interview with the young Persian! The lad told his master, who advised him to have nothing to say to the lady if he valued his head, and there the matter rests. I wonder what the Sirdar would say if he knew about this.

18th March.

This morning the Chief has asked when we hope to be ready to move. This looks like business, and we shall all be glad to leave this, though I almost regret my garden, which is now looking lovely. The blossoms on the fruit-trees look beautiful, and the air is loaded with their perfume; the grass too is getting its natural colour and altogether I leave Candahar with regret. One gets accustomed to anything, and I have now had so much to do with the making of this place that I feel a liking for it. . . . .

Diary, 17th March.—. . . A Ghazi attacked a kahar[1] in the city yesterday and was killed by a Sikh. News came from Kelat of an attack made on two men of the 59th by a Ghazi, who was shot; one of the 59th men wounded his comrade! . . . . .

18th March.—. . . . A horrid case of outrage has occurred, . . . implicating two sowars of the 19th B.L., the first case of misconduct that has happened since the force took the field. The culprits shall be made to pay if proved guilty. Secret telegrams refer to Abdul Rahman accepting Cabul under our auspices.

[1] Palanquin-bearer.

19*th March.*—The Secretary of State objects to *direct* communication with Abdul Rahman, but the Viceroy has asked me to send verbal messages, which I shall do through his family here. . . . .

20*th March.*—The Ghazis are becoming very lively owing to the approach of the Nao Roz. A naick[1] of the 25th P.N.I. killed yesterday in the Bazaar; Ghazi killed by sentry. Detachment of 19th P.I. arrived to-day and one of the Punjab Cavalry yesterday. A boy from Giriskh attacked European to-day; did no damage.

21*st March.*—Received orders to move on the 25th. It is to be hoped we shall be ready by that time. A man of the 59th killed last night outside the city. He was absent without leave and got out of the cantonment by a false-hood.

22*nd March.*—. . . . Orders received from the Viceroy about taking Abdul Rahman's family to Cabul; . . . . wrote to Bobs about our move on Ghuzni.

23*rd March.*—. . . . . The Viceroy seems to think there is a chance of a general rising, but I can see no ground for such a supposition. Of course the time for disturbances has arrived, and we may expect some fizzing, but not much more.

24*th March.*—. . . . . Ghazi hanged to-day by Sirdar on my recommendation. . . . .

26*th March.*—Orders received last night from Viceroy to the effect that Roberts and I are to have independent commands, but are to report to the Commander-in-Chief. If we come together the supreme command is to devolve on me as the senior. . . . . Main employment cutting down requisitions for transport.

27*th March.*—. . . . . Inspected 2nd Brigade this morning, and found all camel and mule equipment imperfectly fitted. Went to see Heavy Battery practice, which was very good. . . . .

28*th March.*—. . . . . Brigade marches to-morrow.

29*th March.*—Heard from Government last night that

[1] Corporal.

a column is to move on Ghuzni from Cabul. I have telegraphed my views on this point. . . . .

Busy writing some home letters and arranging for the march to-morrow. The Sirdar is coming to see me this afternoon. . . . .

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

CANDAHAR, *29th March* 1880.

This is the last letter I shall write to you from this place. . . . . My friend Sher Ali has been in grief the last two or three days in consequence of the defeat of some of his men in Zemindawar. They went into action with three or four caps only per man, and, when they were exhausted, the enemy came and knocked over seven of his officers and killed a lot of his men. It was very stupid of his people, going into action so unprepared; but the fault is partly due to us, as we promised the Sirdar a supply of caps months ago, and they were kept at Quetta, unknown to me, until this catastrophe took place. The Sirdar was terribly distressed about the whole affair, and so depressed that he was inclined to throw up the sponge at one time. In his interest I pointed out to him that if people saw him dependent on us for every little row that occurred in his country, no one would believe in his power; and that he would lose credit with his own people and with our Government. He saw this at once and plucked up spirit, but he requires a good deal of careful nursing till he gets his troops and officials established in the more distant parts of the province. . . . . The troops are in great glee at getting away from this; they are always in a fright lest anything should happen to stop their leaving. The Padre has invested in a ten-anna sword, which he carries about everywhere, since the Ghazis began to get lively. He told me a good story about the Bishop of Lahore last night, who has been staying with us. It appears he and the Bishop were coming home from dinner one night, and had to pass my sentry before they could get into the house. The man naturally pulled up in his march and stood at attention. When the Bishop got near him, he made a low bow and

said, "Good-evening, my friend!" Tableau. Padre nearly exploded, and the sentry looked as though the Bishop was a lunatic.[1] . . . .

The "Padre" thus sums up his experience of Sir Donald Stewart at Candahar.

"During our stay at Candahar, General Stewart effected great changes in the feelings of the people of South Afghanistan. The whole surrounding country quieted down, and with the exception of a few fanatical Ghazis who occasionally disturbed the camp and city, everything remained quiet and peaceful. The General took a great interest in the welfare of all under his command; and in addition to seeing that all the troops were well housed in the mud barracks and tents, constantly visited the hospitals, and especially so during a severe epidemic of cholera, which broke out in 1879, when we lost 65 officers and men in 28 days. Day after day the General would himself visit the large cholera hospital tent, and cheer up the poor fellows lying there ill. At this time too he established weekly gymkhanas, and did all he could to give the men healthy out-door amusement to keep them from thinking of the sickness in their midst. He was constantly amongst them, setting a noble example to officers and men at a most trying time. He had a large Field Church erected in the middle of the camp, consisting of two sepoys' tents, fitted up inside with rows of mud seats covered with sacking, where the voluntary services were held on Sunday evenings. The Parade service was held in the open in the morning, and to both of these services the General always came. In every way as a Christian, an officer, and a gentleman, General Stewart set a splendid example, strict but kind, upright and just, always ready to give advice when needed; and one felt that his advice was good."

[1] A very characteristic story of the gentle and most courteous Bishop French.

CHAPTER XXI

FROM CANDAHAR TO CABUL.

THE day after the last-quoted letter was written, General Stewart's force, having been relieved by troops of the Bombay army, set out on its march towards Cabul *viâ* Kelat-i-Ghilzai and Ghuzni. Meanwhile the Home Parliament had been dissolved, and the early elections gave a clear indication that the tide was setting in strongly against Lord Beaconsfield's Government. The progress of the coming change and its possible effects are noted from time to time in the diary and letters.

Diary, 30th March.—Marched to-day from Candahar to Momun. The Sirdar escorted me as far as the last village on the road, and was, apparently, very much affected. He has good reason to regret my departure, as I have tried to be a true friend to him at all times. . . . .

ROBAT, *31st March.*—A short march of about seven miles. . . . .

AKHOOND ZIARUT, *1st April.*—Pleasant march, only one bit of road swampy near camp at Robat. Got in after march of eight hours and ten minutes. I should say distance under twelve miles. . . . .

SHUHO-I-SHUFA, *2nd April.*—An easy march except for heavy guns and camels; many water-cuts which impede guns and transport cattle. The villagers at Akhoond Ziarut flooded the new road out of camp—to be fined heavily. Very cold during the night.

TIRANDAZ, *3rd April.*—Government asked yesterday whether I should like a column to be sent from Cabul to Shekabad. I replied that one ought, in my opinion, to be there about the time I reach Ghuzni. Last night very cold; to-day cloudy and sultry. . . . .

JULDUCK, *4th April.*—A long march of nearly fifteen miles, sun very hot, but air cool and pleasant. Asked Foreign Office for extent of my political authority after assuming supreme command in North Afghanistan. Service in the evening.

KELAT-I-GHILZAI, *6th April.*—Arrived here this morning at a quarter to seven A.M. Very cold. . . . . .

7th April.—Issued orders for march to Shahjui, though the supplies are far from satisfactory; —— has not behaved well about them, but it is my own fault for not going into the matter myself. Very windy and dusty, thermometer fell to 32° last night; warmer day than yesterday. . . . No news of importance from Ghuzni, though many rumours. Halted at Kelat-i-Ghilzai.

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

CAMP, KELAT-I-GHILZAI, *7th April* 1880.

. . . . I have been very busy in settling everything for the forward move. I am sorry to say that some things are not quite satisfactory. Our supplies have not yet all come up from Candahar, and I am in doubt whether to go on without them, trusting to get what I want from Cabul, or wait here for a few days. I suppose it will end in my going on, as I cannot bear the idea of halting. The news received from home about the elections has put a sad damper on all our spirits. We think it quite possible that there may be complete change of policy. If the Liberals gain the day, everything that is being done here may be upset. Of course any violent change of policy will have a very disturbing effect all over the country. I forget whether I told you in my last that I am to have supreme command in North Afghanistan as soon as I can open communition with Bobs. . . . All this is unpleasant for me, as I

daresay some people may think I have had a hand in the matter. Now, though I have often had much provocation, I have not once written nor suggested the writing of anything for the press connected with my doings in this campaign. I believe that sort of thing pays; but it is opposed to my practice, and I am now thankful that I have nothing to regret in that respect. People are beginning to estimate our proceedings at their proper worth; and I daresay we shall all get such credit as we deserve in the end. We are getting on very well on our march, and our transport is good; but I am sorry to say our supply arrangements are not as good as they might be. We were rather hustled at the end, and the Commissariat have not fulfilled their promises, but we shall get on tolerably well if we are not opposed before we reach Ghuzni. We hear all sorts of reports about gatherings in our front, but I don't expect any trouble before Mookur, if then. . . . . I hear an awful row outside, owing to the advent in camp of a swarm of officers from Barter's [1] Camp, which is about seven miles off, on the other side of the river. We are marching abreast of each other on different sides of the Turnak river. I hear them all chaffing the Padre about his fighting sword. He used to carry a stick only, but he has been induced to invest in a sword, for which he paid the high price of ten annas and four pies! He is never without this weapon, and he looks about the most warlike man in camp. He is an immense favourite with every one, high and low—just the man to serve with troops, because he is kind and attentive without humbug. The soldiers all like him, and look forward to his visits with pleasure, because he does not pester them with formalities. Every day after the march, when we have finished our breakfast, consisting of two hard-boiled eggs and sandwiches or hunches of bread and cold tea, which everybody has to carry in his holsters, a lot of fellows go through all sorts of sports, including jumping, hopscotch, tug-of-war,

[1] Brigadier-General Barter, C.B., commanding 1st Infantry Brigade.

high kicking, etc. Colonel Alured Johnson, though he is the fattest of the lot, generally comes off first in everything, except the long jump, which Norman does best. The Padre is an awful duffer at all sports except shooting with a pistol, at which he is A1. In this way we spend the time till the tents come up. I read and look on. We have given up our dooly, as an example to the rest of the force, and as we are cutting down our baggage to the lowest figure. It is necessary to be particular in such matters. It is certainly not nice having to sit out for three or four hours in the sun without a particle of shelter; but as the men have to do it, we do it too. The officers of the 60th carry their cloaks just like the men, and not one of them has a pony except the Field Officers. This makes the men jolly, as they know that no indulgence is gained by the officers. We have now only spirits in our mess, and shortly I shall be reduced to rum; but that is scarce, owing to a failure of the commissariat at Candahar. Fortunately the weather is splendid, though rather cold at night. I have had to disentomb my ulster. . . . .

It will be observed that in this letter General Stewart refers with a feeling of regret, almost amounting to distress, to an inevitable consequence which would ensue on his arrival in Northern Afghanistan—namely, that as a General Officer many years senior to General Roberts, he would assume the supreme command of the forces in and around Cabul. But the firm, long-standing friendship which bound these two great men together made the transfer of authority an easier matter than it otherwise could have been. General Roberts writing on the 20th April to General Stewart says: "If there is one man in India I would and could serve under—it is you.". . . . Three days later, when Roberts had heard of Stewart's great victory at Ahmud Khel, he wrote:

MY DEAR STEWART,—We are all so delighted at the result of your day with the enemy on the 19th. What a grand success!—accept my hearty congratulations. . . . . Your coming here to take supreme command . . . is of course right and proper, and I am only glad to think that I shall serve under so old and valued a friend.—Yours affectionately,

FRED. ROBERTS.

Diary. SIR-I-ASP, *8th April.*—Received long letter from Viceroy last night regarding the situation in Afghanistan, and laying down the policy I am to pursue. I answered briefly in acknowledgment by telegram. . . . .

Lord Lytton to Sir Donald Stewart.

CALCUTTA, *27th March* 1880.

MY DEAR SIR DONALD,—It is an age since I have troubled you with a letter; but the reason why, of late, I have not written to you more frequently is that I was aware that Sir George Colley was in pretty regular correspondence with you on my behalf, and that you could write to him as freely as to myself, with the knowledge that your wishes and opinions on military and political affairs would always command my immediate attention when conveyed to me through him. Colonel Colley's recent appointment to the High Commissionership of the Transvaal has, however, interrupted this channel of communication between us, and I shall be most grateful if you will kindly continue to keep me confidentially informed, by letters either to myself or my present private secretary, Colonel Brackenbury, of your personal views and wishes on all important matters. . . . . On the military situation I wish to say a few words. . . . . Your relations towards both the Commander-in-Chief and the Government of India you will conduct in accordance with the general principles laid down by the Minute, which I have issued with the concurrence of the Commander-in-Chief, and the terms of which I have already

communicated to you by telegraph. You and Roberts will continue to exercise independent commands in the field, until you have effected a junction between your force and his, when you will at once assume the general command of the operations in the field. That being the case, I am anxious to explain to you unreservedly my personal views and wishes as to the aim and scope of these operations.

In the first place, I am satisfied that the settlement of our political relations with Northern Afghanistan cannot be either promoted or improved by the prolongation of our occupation of Cabul, or any other part of that country. On the contrary, I am persuaded that every month which prolongs our presence in the country only increases the difficulty of leaving and diminishes the chance of finding or establishing in it a native ruler whose authority could survive the withdrawal of the British Force. If we are to stay at Cabul till we are able to hand it over to "a strong, friendly, and independent ruler," we must stay there for years, indefinitely. Even immediate annexation would be preferable to indefinite occupation. Both, however, are impossible. And that being the case, there is no advantage, political or military, to be gained, whilst there are many risks, military as well as political, to be incurred, by remaining a day longer at Cabul than is absolutely requisite, not for the establishment there of a strong Government, nor even for the pacification of the country, but simply for the sufficient assertion of our military power, in reference to any hostile combination against us which the Afghans are at present able to form. If we do not withdraw as soon as we have thus asserted our power to remain, we shall have to go on asserting it again and again, year after year, against fresh combinations, which will periodically recur at certain seasons, and be periodically defeated or dispersed, without leaving us any nearer than we are now to a satisfactory solution of our political difficulties. Of this General Roberts is no less firmly convinced than I am myself, ... and I can say with certainty that it is strongly shared by H.M. Government,

as well as by the ablest of our military officers now in North Afghanistan. . . . .

For all these reasons I am very anxious to effect the evacuation of Northern Afghanistan, and get our native army, or the bulk of it, safely back by the autumn of this year, at latest, and before sanitary considerations or the conditions of the season furnish pretexts for keeping the troops another year beyond the frontier. For the fulfilment of this increasing desire, however, I reckon mainly on your considerate and energetic co-operation when you take up the general command of the forces in North Afghanistan.

Of course we must not leave Afghanistan with our tail between our legs. Retreating columns should be so organised as to enable them not only to repel any attack upon their rear or flank, but to turn round and pursue their assailants to any distance after having defeated them. I cannot, however, suppose that there will be any difficulty in this with the large forces available for the purpose, the completeness of their transport equipment, and the large accumulation of supplies already stored at Cabul. . . . . Ghuzni lies upon your way. It is the centre of the only hostile combination that has been, or can be, formed against us—the stronghold of all the malcontents in this part of Afghanistan. It is, I think, most necessary that Ghuzni should be visited. . . . . But this, I conceive, can be done more effectually by driving a strong force through Ghuzni than by keeping one in it. I have never contemplated an *occupation* of Ghuzni as any part of the programme to which my sanction has been given, and I am hopeful that you will not find it necessary to linger there any great length of time, not only on account of your supplies, but also because the sooner you effect a junction with Roberts the sooner you will be able to exercise over the whole situation, political as well as military, in Northern Afghanistan, that individual personal direction which cannot be too promptly or too completely established there. . . . . There will, of course, be an immense deal to settle at Cabul before our force there can be with-

drawn or weakened. But as the season advances, the Khyber line becomes deadly; and you will, doubtless, consider the expediency of getting safely back to India all troops not really wanted at Cabul or elsewhere, before the means of getting them back are practically reduced to the single line of the Kurram. . . . .

It seems to me that if there were one thing more likely than all others to render impossible a satisfactory or durable understanding with Abdul Rahman, or any strong and capable Afghan ruler, it would be to demand from him a further sacrifice of Afghan territory, or a further surrender of Afghan jurisdiction. Is it our interest to weaken his future position to the utmost by simultaneously taking from him territory east and west at the outset? And if he acquiesced under pressure in such an arrangement, would not his secret resentment against us for having imposed on him involve political disadvantages far greater than any political benefit to be obtained? . . . . Abdul Rahman represents our last chance of effecting an easy settlement of durable relations with Northern Afghanistan; and should we not ruin this last chance of "a consummation devoutly to be wished for" by attempting to impose on Abdul Rahman any territorial conditions harsher than those which are already involved in the severance from her kingdom of the whole of Western Afghanistan? . . . . Believe me, my dear General, very sincerely yours,

LYTTON.

Diary, NOWROCK, *9th April.*—A long march of nearly fourteen miles; roads for the most part very good; one bad nullah, which can be turned, and one or two dips requiring ramping. Supplies have to be brought from a distance. No village near, but grass in considerable quantities. Rain now falling.

TAZI, *10th April.*—A short march of about eight miles. Forage obtainable in small quantities. Very little cultivation along the road, which was good for the most part. Nothing heard of stores coming up from rear. No official

orders from Commander-in-Chief, so I propose to act on Viceroy's private letter. . . . .

CHAR JOOI, 11*th April*.—Thirteen miles. Good road, except at three nullahs. Heavy rain last night, but day fine. Barter's Brigade two miles off, across Turnak. . . . . Answered Viceroy's letter of 27th March.

CHUSMA POONGUCK, 12*th April*.—Short march of less than eight miles. Great excitement in camp watching Barter's troops searching for enemy, who appeared on his front. Mullicks of villages deserted, and are said to be collecting near Mookur. . . . .

AGHOJAN, 13*th April*.—Called Ghojan in old maps. Encamped almost on the same spot as Lord Keane's Army in July 1839. Old maps not so correct as they might be. First brigade pitched at Killa Murtezn, about four miles S.E. near Turnak. . . . .

MOOKUR, 14*th April*.—About ten miles. Hough's distance[1] is exaggerated. Barter took his brigade along the river instead of making straight for Mookur. . . . . Villages all deserted. Some of the people watching us from the hill-tops. . . . .

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

CAMP, MOOKUR, 14*th April* 1880.

. . . . . Our latest telegraphic news is dated 3rd April, and all we know is that the elections were going dead against the Government. . . . . The Government felt cock-sure of success, and so did most people out here, but I have had a sort of feeling that they would fail. Of course I am sorry that a change of Government should take place at this moment, but I think the change will do good, as the state of affairs on the Continent will force the Liberals to pursue a patriotic policy whether they like it or not. That is the only thing which will check the spirit of radicalism, which is doing so much harm in England at the present time. I suppose Lord Lytton will resign at once. We are

[1] As marked in an old route map.

all wondering who his successor is to be; I hope Lord Dufferin. He would, by all accounts, be the best man we could get, and as he is a Liberal he will have a good chance if he cares to come. What a budget of news I shall have to deal with when I meet Bobs' column on the other side of Ghuzni! Whatever Government is in power, my orders cannot be changed, as every word Lord Lytton has written to me might have been written by the Opposition; and he tells me that the Home Government are as anxious to withdraw from North Afghanistan as the Liberals can be. Of course this takes the wind out of their sails, whatever happens, and I daresay it is a stroke of Lord Beaconsfield's. . . . .

JUMROOD, *17th April.*

We halted to-day, a great boon to everybody. To myself it has been very grateful, for I have been very seedy for some days. I think the sun is telling on me, as I feel perfectly well in most ways, yet I cannot eat or sleep. Sitting out in the sun for hours, till the tents come on, is very trying, and I have once or twice gone to sleep in the sun, which cannot be good for any one; but when one is overpowered with sleep, it is difficult to avoid going off into a doze. We are greatly worried by bodies of men who potter about near us, but who have not the pluck to attack us. Our friends the Hazaras[1] are taking advantage of our presence to burn down all the Afghan forts and villages, and I daresay we shall get the credit of it. They are a queer people. Yesterday a band of them surrounded a fort containing 25 Afghans who had given us a lot of supplies, but would not allow our men to take them away. Euan Smith went off and insisted on their leaving the place till 11 o'clock to-day. After the truce was effected two of the Hazaras marched boldly into the fort, and catching hold of the Afghans' beards kissed them and asked for their brother, who they supposed to be a prisoner in the fort! This happened about ten minutes after they

[1] The Hazaras and the Ghilzai Afghans are hereditary foes. The former are of Mongolian extraction, and though settled in Afghanistan are not an Afghan tribe.

had cut down one of the Afghans who ventured out to speak to some of our people. . . . .

The fact is, they are all barbarian cut-throats. I shall not have anything to say to the Hazaras, and shall decline their co-operation if they offer it. . . . .

MUSHEEKU, *18th April.*

We passed through this morning the prettiest bit of country I have seen in Afghanistan. The forts and villages are most picturesque, and with the snowy range in the background, the scene is almost European. Within, there is nothing but desolation; half the forts are on fire, and even the grave-stones are being smashed up from motives of sheer revenge. This morning our pickets came across two women who were just being driven off by some Hazaras, who said they belonged to them; but the women at once said they were Afghans, who had come back to their village during the night to search for a child who had been lost in their flight. They did not find the child, but I sent the women to the nearest picket of the enemy who are their friends. I believe the Hazaras would have killed them or sold them as slaves. We also found a small boy, who, according to his own statement, was left five days alone in the village covered with wounds. We have brought him on, as there is no one about to whom he could be made over. We did not like to leave him to die of starvation and wounds. The Hazaras are having it all their own way to-day, but to-morrow or next day, when we are out of the valley, the Afghans will return, and they will then have to fight it out to the bitter end. The Ghilzais, who have been following us all the way from here to Kelat-i-Ghilzai, are still on our flank, but whenever we move towards them they always make off to the hills; they are a great nuisance as we cannot get at them, and yet cannot ignore them altogether. It is rather curious that they followed Sir John Keane's troops in precisely the same way in 1839. . . . .

Diary, NANI, *19th April.*—Had a sharp action to-day with the Ghilzais, numbering eight to ten thousand men.

Before we could form up they fell on Hughes' Brigade, and drove it back for a short distance. Some of the cavalry did not do well, nor did some of the other troops. They were hardly prepared for a rush of some 2000 swordsmen, who dashed upon the line without a check. Action fought about half-way between Musheeku and Nani.

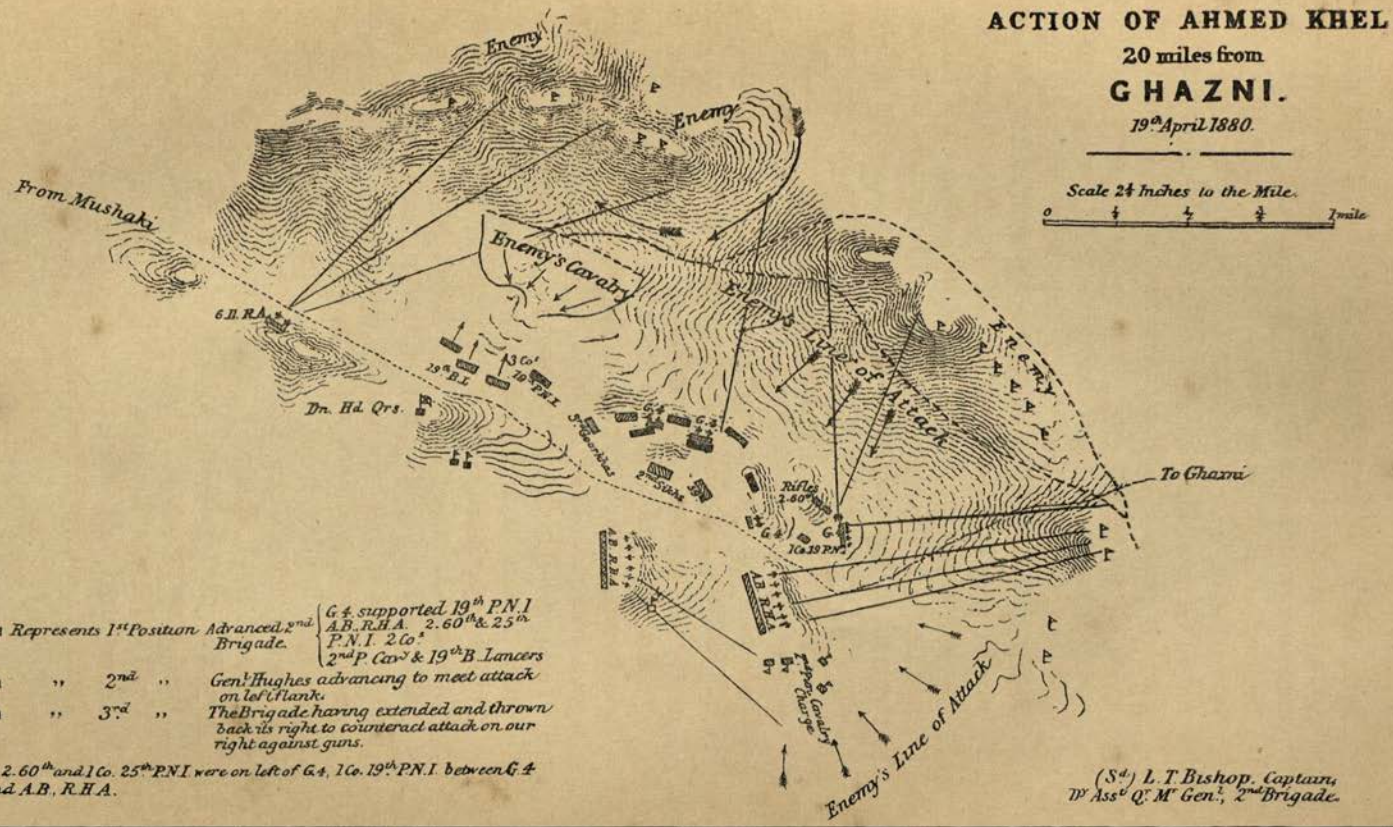
The preceding short entry refers to the great and successful engagement now known as the battle of Ahmud Khel, of which General Chapman in a recent article[1] has given the following vivid account :—

"Since leaving Candahar we had been aware of an enemy moving parallel with our advance, but had found it impossible to gain any exact intelligence regarding his strength or intentions. Our scouts were everywhere met by an enemy's scouts, and our political information altogether failed us. It was impossible to delay the march, and the chance of attack on our camps was carefully guarded against. On the 18th April a considerable body threatened us, and the order of march for the following day was in consequence altered, the very considerable baggage column, which accompanied us, being placed between the leading brigade and a complete brigade which constituted the rearguard. Our absolute ignorance of the country was our greatest difficulty, the systematic desertion carried out by the enemy having made it impossible to gain the smallest information. On the 18th April the Division left the camping-ground at Mushaki[2] at daylight, and after marching six miles halted for breakfast, when the cavalry scouts caught sight of the enemy some five miles ahead. By the aid of glasses it became evident that an immense gathering of horse and foot was awaiting our march upon a low line of hills to our right front at a distance of about five miles. The troops were at once drawn up to advance in regular order, and moved slowly forward. When we

[1] See *Blackwood's Magazine* for February 1902.

[2] Called Musheeku by General Stewart.

were within about 1400 yards of the hill, I rode forward to General Hughes, who commanded the infantry, requesting him to form for attack, the intention being that we should be the assailants—our batteries at the same time moving into position near the road. Suddenly while I was speaking to General Hughes, we found ourselves under fire from a nearer portion of the range, and in an incredibly short space of time two long lines of swordsmen seemed to spring from the hill, extending so as to envelop our right and left. Down they came, at least 3000 in number, sweeping over the intervening ground with marvellous rapidity, and quite regardless of our fire. These fanatic warriors were on foot, but right and left, to get round the flanks, rode horsemen with standards; the whole hill seemed to be moving, and far away the plain became crowded with beings scattered like ants, yet all working with one object. In five minutes the whole line was engaged; the Ghazis reached the guns and forced them back to a safer position, drove in a squadron of cavalry on our left, and penetrated dauntlessly close up to the position occupied by the General and his staff, some being killed within 30 yards of us. The scene was one which baffles description: such an enormous number of Ghazi swordsmen had not been brought together since the battle of Meeanee. Their bravery was magnificent, and the fury of their onslaught tried the nerves of our troops for a few minutes; for nothing stopped them short of death. We had one brigade on baggage guard, and had to put every man into the fighting line before the attack was stayed. Six men of the two companies forming Sir Donald's escort were killed, and many officers of cavalry and infantry were engaged hand to hand. After about an hour's fighting the General ordered the 'cease fire' to be sounded. The force opposed to us was variously estimated at from 12,000 to 15,000 men, but the attack was made entirely by the fanatic swordsmen. Their losses amounted to over 1000 dead in front of our line, and their wounded carried out of action must have been twice as many. We had but 1400 Infantry actually in the firing line; 5 officers were wounded,


ACTION OF AHMED KHEL
20 miles from
GHAZNI.
19th April 1880.
Scale 24 Inches to the Mile.
0
1 mile
Enemy
Enemy
From Mushaki
Enemy's Cavalry
Enemy's Line of Attack
Enemy
6 H.R.A.
Dn. Hd. Qrs.
3 Co's 70 P.N.I.
29th B.I.
G 4
G 3
Rifles 2.60th
1 Co 19 P.N.I
To Ghazni
A.B. R.H.A.
Enemy's Line of Attack
Represents 1st Position Advanced 2nd Brigade. G 4 supported 19th P.N.I A.B. R.H.A. 2.60th & 25th P.N.I. 2 Co's 2nd P. Cav'y & 19th B. Lancers
" 2nd " Gen'l Hughes advancing to meet attack on left flank.
" 3rd " The Brigade having extended and thrown back its right to counteract attack on our right against guns.
1 Co. 2.60th and 1 Co. 25th P.N.I were on left of G 4, 1 Co. 19th P.N.I. between G 4 and A.B., R.H.A.
(Sd.) L. T. Bishop. Captain,
Dy Ass.t Q.r M.r Gen.l, 2nd Brigade.

Action of Ahmed Khel, 20 miles from Ghazni, 19th April 1880.

[To face p. 332.

16 men killed, and 109 wounded. Within an hour of the 'cease fire' having sounded, the enemy had entirely disappeared, leaving no sign excepting the dead. We buried our dead, tended the wounded, and marched forward over the ground that had been occupied by the Afghans in the morning. The entire division marched 18 miles that day, and camp was pitched at four P.M., when we had a second instalment of breakfast."

Diary, ISPANDI (Nukai on map), *20th April*. . . . . Ghuzni in sight, 5 or 6 miles distant. Bodies of the enemy on hills to east. . . . .

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart

CAMP, ISPANDI (*within five or six miles of Ghuzni*), *20th April.*

I could not write yesterday as we had a very considerable engagement with some 12,000 or 15,000 of the enemy, and pursued them so far that we made a double march. I shall not attempt to give you any account of the fight, but for a few minutes I and all my Staff were in great peril. The Ghazis came on, sword in hand, and a part of the line gave way before them, and to make matters worse, there was a stampede of a part of the cavalry, and everything was swept before it; at last they were rallied. . . . . The returns are not all in, but we had five officers wounded and over 130 men killed and wounded. There were six of my escort killed. Some 2000 swordsmen, almost all Ghazis, rushed on my line, and nothing could stop them except extreme coolness and steadiness. . . . . However, we eventually made a good business of it, and the enemy left about 1000 dead on the ground. Some of the wretches feigned to be dead, and shot some of our men as they passed by. The Ghazis are still hovering about the place, and say they are going to attack us again. There is to be no fight at Ghuzni after all. I have had deputations of the people in camp, and they say there is no collection of troops in the fort, and I shall therefore not touch it. I suppose I shall halt two days to rest the troops

and fill up supplies. Warneford behaved capitally in the fight; he helped to stop the retiring Cavalry by threatening one of them with his stick, which effectually pulled him up. It is amusing to hear all the stories that are going about camp, and the wonderful feats of arms that have been done by different men. Norman did very well, and was cool and collected, and most useful. Unfortunately, I had only one Infantry Brigade up; the other was with the rearguard, and we did not expect the enemy to fight that morning. He had been hanging on our flank for ten days, and we thought his game was to join the malcontents at Ghuzni. The people at Ghuzni say they will convey letters for us to Cabul. I shall send a few telegrams and a short note to you, but I shall not trust my regular letters to this messenger. I am dying for news, but I cannot expect to get any till I meet Bobs' column on the 27th or 28th.

Diary, GHUZNI, 21*st April*.—Marched to this place without opposition; its strength has been grossly exaggerated. It is completely commanded, and field guns would knock the curtains into practicable breaches with ease. It is moreover in miserable repair. . . . .

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart[1]

GHUZNI, 21*st April* 1880.

We marched into this place to-day, but my reconnoitring parties came into the fort last evening, and interviewed the acting Governor. There are no troops in Ghuzni or in the neighbourhood, so we shall move on towards Cabul on the 24th. I want to give men and animals two days' rest. We had our fight on the 19th. Some 12,000 or 15,000 men attacked us furiously when we were on the march, and I had to meet them with a little more than half my force. By the time Barter's Brigade arrived from the rear, the enemy were in full retreat. For a few minutes we were in real danger in one part of the

[1] This was evidently an extra letter sent by special opportunity, lest that of the 20th should miscarry.

line, which gave way before the Ghazis, who came up to within 20 or 30 yards of the guns. We counted some 800 dead bodies of the enemy on the field. What number were wounded I cannot say. Our loss is considerable; seventeen killed and 115 wounded, including six officers; but only one of these is dangerously hit—Young, of the 19th Bengal Cavalry. You must remember him at Mian Mir. Poor fellow! he is frightfully cut about, and I fear he cannot recover, though he is in great spirits, and thinks he will pull through.[1] He has over a dozen sword-cuts, besides a bullet through his back. I shall say no more, as I don't know that this will ever reach you. I am sending it by the hand of a Hindu, who is taking some telegrams for us. Norman did very well on the 19th, and was very cool and collected. Warneford distinguished himself by stopping some runaway sowars who lost their heads. The Padre's stick had the desired effect, however, and they pulled up. We are getting on very well, except as regards native supplies, which have run rather short at times since we left Kelat-i-Ghilzai. The country has been entirely deserted, and we had the greatest difficulty in procuring food for the native portion of the force. . . . .

Diary, GHUZNI, *22nd April*.—The Ghilzai leaders, finding that they are to get no assistance from the Ghuzni malcontents, seem to have dispersed. . . . .

From Captain Norman Stewart to his Mother, Lady Stewart.

GHUZNI, *22nd April* 1880.

Just one line to tell you how well and jolly the Governor is. I think the fight we had three days ago has cheered him up immensely. I have been told that the men of the force are awfully pleased with the way he behaved, as he remained in the hottest corner without moving. At one time they were very near, many of the enemy being sabred within ten yards of him. As this letter may never reach, I will say no more until arrival at Cabul.

[1] He did recover.

With regard to the numbers killed and wounded at Ahmud Khel, General Chapman writes:

"When General Roberts' force (marching from Cabul to Candahar some months later) moved over the ground of Ahmud Khel we discovered a shrine 'to 1100 martyrs,' showing that the number killed exceeded Sir Donald's estimate. The wounded at the same time were estimated by the people at between 2000 and 3000, showing what a serious blow had been dealt to the rising of the people. This fact made the march of Sir Frederick Roberts' force—unmolested *en route*—a certainty."

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

GHUZNI, *22nd April* 1880.

. . . . Reports have just come in that the Ghazis are collecting again for another fight. I can hardly think that they will try it on again, but we can never be certain. We are now in heliographic communication with General Ross,[1] who is some forty or fifty miles off. I am asking him to send messages to Cabul for the telegraph, so you will probably hear of our doings in England about the 27th or 28th inst. The officers of the force are very anxious that I should put down the enemy's numbers and losses at a much higher figure than I have done, but I don't see the good of exaggerating. I believe the enemy's killed is larger in amount than I have stated, but I gave the counted numbers, and made no account of those killed in parts of the field which were not visited by our troops. I shall have to halt here a day or two longer than I expected, to try and settle the country, which is in a state of anarchy and confusion. If I succeed in this I shall be quite satisfied, for the wretched people are simply exterminating each other. . . . .

Diary, GHUZNI, *23rd April*.—Sent Palliser and Barter to drive away the Ghazi gathering that has been threatening

[1] Who had been sent with a force from Cabul (see Diary of 3rd April, p. 321).

us since our arrival. They reported that the enemy was so numerous and so strongly posted that they did not think they were justified in attacking. I went myself, and sent the two Brigades at the enemy, who fled at once, leaving ——[1] dead on the ground. . . . . .

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

GHUZNI, *24th April.*

I have been obliged to halt here to-day to give the troops a rest after their labours yesterday. They started at half-past three in the morning, with nothing but their breakfast, and some did not return to camp until dark. . . . . We know absolutely nothing of what has been going on in the world for twenty-one days. We don't even know the result of the elections, or whether Lord Lytton has resigned. . . . . My stay here will after all do some good, I think. The Hazaras, who declared to me that they could never live alongside the Afghans again when I parted with them two nights ago, took my advice, and had an interview yesterday with the Afghan Governor of Ghuzni, who declared to me that he is prepared to meet them half-way. If a truce can be secured for a time, both sides will see that it will be in their own interests to let bygones be bygones. . . . . I am quite prepared to pay these people for their pecuniary losses, but I have told them clearly that I can do no more for them. I am happy to say that I have never accepted assistance from any Afghan, and I can leave the country feeling that no man can say he is likely to suffer from our friendship. I have not forgotten the lesson of the last war, and I have from the first resolved that no Afghan should be able to say that the English had done him an injury among his own people. My motives are selfish, in the best sense, for I want to see the Afghans strong and independent, because

[1] The number of dead is left blank, but elsewhere Stewart says, "We killed 400 of the enemy, and only lost 2 men killed and 9 wounded on our side." This was the action known as that of Urzoo. It effectually broke up the gathering of Ghazis and tribesmen.

their alliance would in that case be valuable to us. So long as the country is in a state of confusion, it is a danger to itself and its neighbours. I always state my motives, because I do not wish any one to think I am acting from motives of pure philanthropy. . . . .

Note by the Reverend T. J. L. Warneford.

"In the spring of 1880 we received orders to march up to Cabul, the Bombay troops relieving us at Candahar. At Ahmud Khel, near to Ghuzni, we met a strong force of Afghans, numbering about 20,000, and we had to give them battle. I had the honour of riding near the General throughout. General Stewart was cool and collected, and gave his orders clearly. Our total strength, European and native, was about 7000. After an hour's rather hot work, the enemy began to retreat, and we marched on about 5 miles to Nani, and formed a camp. The day after, we marched on to Ghuzni, and after scattering a small force at Urzoo two days later, we resumed the march to Cabul uninterruptedly. Throughout the fighting the General showed great clemency. He would allow no looting, nor anything to be taken from the natives without payment. When the women came out from Urzoo, after we had scattered the small force there, the General said to them they could return to their village, and that they would not be molested, as we had not come to fight against women and children.

"We marched on thence to the Logar Valley, where we encamped at the foot of the Shutargardan Pass. Soon after General Stewart left this Force to take up the supreme command at Cabul."

Diary, SHUSHGAO, *25th April.*—Received letters to-day from Viceroy and Commander-in-Chief; very disturbing; the Viceroy wants me to let Griffin[1] have full political authority. . . . . I cannot consent to this.

[1] The Chief Political Officer at Cabul—now Sir Lepel Griffin, K.C.S.I.

HUFTASSYA, *26th April.*—Some snow fell last night on the hills. A short march. General Ross had a fight yesterday with some marauders under Bahram Khan; said to have killed 70 and wounded 150. Wrote to Lepel Griffin about my political powers and wired to Viceroy.

HYDER KHEL, *27th April.*—A very bad, narrow road running between the foot of hills and cultivation; country populous and well cultivated. General Ross and a whole lot of his officers came to see us to-day. English mail and papers received, but no home letters. . . . . Received thanks of Duke of Cambridge and Commander-in-Chief, also of Adjutant-General.

SHEKABAD, *28th April.*—Wrote to General Ross about business to-morrow, so that there may be no mistake about the matter. Barter came on to Shekabad. Thanked all the troops for their services, a very distressing ceremony after serving with them for eighteen months.

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

TOPE, *29th April.*

. . . . . I yesterday parted with my Division with deep sorrow. They had been with me for 18 months, had been formed after my own fashion, and understood my ways. When it came to leaving them and saying farewell, I hardly knew what I was saying; and then the breaking up of the Head Quarters Staff was worst of all—the Padre fairly broke down. I am going among a lot of strangers, and in a position, too, which I do not like. Two days ago I was astonished at getting a telegram from Lord Lytton, telling me that Griffin was to be the political officer at Cabul, and that I was not to overrule him without reference to the Government of India. Of course this position would be intolerable, so I telegraphed to the Viceroy, saying that this was inconsistent with H.E.'s letter telling me that I was to have undivided control at Cabul in matters political and military, and begging that I might be formally relieved from all political responsibility. I offered at the same time to return to India rather than supersede Bobs, who has the

full confidence of the Viceroy. At the same time, I offered to remain in command of the troops if the Government wished me to do so. How it will end I don't know..... I am quite determined that I shall not accept a false position, whatever comes of it.

General Stewart being now on the eve of arriving at Cabul, and of assuming the supreme command of the Army in Northern Afghanistan, a fitting opportunity arises of quoting in some detail the impressions made by him on Colonel Chapman, one of the principal officers of his Staff, and an admittedly expert observer, during his command of the Southern Army in its progress from Mooltan to Ghuzni. These impressions were not written continuously, but were noted from time to time in letters and journals, a circumstance which enhances their value and increases the debt of gratitude for permission to quote them in a collected form.

19th January 1879.—Every one has the greatest confidence in the General; he is one to be trusted in circumstances that call for pluck and decision; he is wonderfully well and very bright.

7th June 1879.—General Stewart is exceptionally clear in all his official work.

17th Nov. 1879.—Sir Richard Temple, the Governor of Bombay, has been here.... He could not fail to discover in General Stewart's administration of political and military matters exceptional strength and simplicity, and he very wisely threw himself in with ideas that are based on principles, and have erected a machinery that works.

18th Jan. 1880.—There is one point in Sir Donald's character which has made a great impression—his perfect honesty of purpose and the fearlessness with which he has expressed his opinions.... His plainness

of speech is a little disturbing, no doubt, but his honest work must tell in the end. The Sirdar, Sher Ali, is beginning to trust the General completely, and this has followed on his finding that he acts up to his promises and says exactly what he means.

CAMP, 29*th April* 1880.

Sir Donald yesterday said good-bye to the old Candahar Field Force, now styled the Ghuzni Field Force, and we are moving towards Cabul with General Ross's Division. I think it has seldom been possible for a Division of all arms (in the British Service) to keep the field so long under one Commander as has been the case with the troops which have constituted the Candahar Field Force. There has been time to work out a complete system, based on the real experience of field operations, to train and instruct the Staff, to effect changes in equipment and organisation, to weed out men physically unfit for service, and to get rid of a great many who have lacked heart for really hard work. Training in quarters at Candahar has been so fortunately carried out that a degree of good fellowship has been fostered which, I believe, is almost unexampled. The personal influence of the Commander has been felt from first to last, and has been exerted to get rid of shams—to cause adherence to the principles and the standing rules laid down in regulations for the guidance of the Army—to increase individual responsibility—to encourage regimental independence, and to maintain the regimental system. I know of no period of my service during which I have learnt so much and have been so happy. Staff work has been not only easy, but exceedingly pleasant, owing to the spirit which has existed throughout the Force, and the earnest striving after excellence which has been the *rôle* of so many. The discipline of the troops has been admirable from first to last; their patience and forbearance have been exceptional.

BEECHHURST, SURREY, 20*th May* 1902.

Sir Donald performed the difficult task entrusted to him, by facing the difficulties that came in his way and by

teaching officers and men to do the like. He was so straightforward and upright in his intentions, and so absolutely honest and disinterested in the work he did, and he worked hard in every department, with a great and detailed knowledge, so that officers sought his guidance and direction, and aimed only at doing their work to his satisfaction. But he had singular knowledge of proportion and avoided concentration, his aim being to see right *principles* applied, and to trust officers to do their best. He was the most conscientious, high-minded public servant that I have known. . . . . He was always sanguine and light-hearted, and got a great deal of amusement out of the smallest incident. His mind was inclined to criticise, and he always sought a thorough explanation from every one, and was liable to be very sarcastic and opposed to all humbug. . . . .

As an example of Stewart's light-heartedness, an anecdote—the truth of which is well vouched for—may be given. On the afternoon of the day of the fight at Ahmud Khel, the General entered his tent at Nani, apparently in order to rest. A Staff-Officer, who had some urgent questions to refer for orders, insisted on being admitted to an interview. He found Sir Donald Stewart lying down, absorbed in "Nicholas Nickleby." "Thereby," says the narrator, "showing how he could remove all care and trouble from his mind, and seek rest in an amusing book."

CHAPTER XXII

IN COMMAND AT CABUL

THE following letter from General Roberts must have been received by Sir Donald Stewart at or near Ghuzni. It is interesting and important as bringing news of the advance of Abdul Rahman, and showing the critical state of the Afghan tribes around Cabul at this time. On the 1st May the two Generals met at Argandeh—the last halting-place on the road from Candahar.

Sir Frederick Roberts to Sir Donald Stewart.

CABUL, 16*th April* 1880.

. . . . . Abdul Rahman is at Kunduz; he is gaining strength and will undoubtedly enter Afghanistan through Kohistan, where nearly every one will welcome him. Several letters from him to people here have fallen into our hands; it was evidently intended that they should; he writes wisely, appeals to the religious feelings of his countrymen, calls himself Amir, and says that he has come to save his country and head a religious war, but that he has no enmity with the British and would be glad to make friends with them if practicable. We expect replies from him to our letters in a day or two. They will no doubt be cautiously worded, but will probably enable us to see what his intentions really are. Meantime there is considerable excitement all over the country. It had been arranged, before the Ghuzni faction came in, that there

was to be a combined attack made on Sherpur and along our line of communication; circulars and letters have been going about for weeks, and people were and are still all prepared for a general rise. . . . . Should Abdul Rahman appear at the head of an army, there will certainly be a big row, which will extend right down to Ghuzni. . . . . Lyall left this a fortnight ago. I impressed on him the necessity of sending us exact orders regarding our leaving the country, so that the retirement may be carried out leisurely. I named the 1st October as the latest date for us to clear out, and said that your move over the Shutargardan and mine by the Khyber should be made simultaneously.

Diary, ARGANDEH, *1st May*.—Marched about three miles beyond the regular stage. Bobs came out to see me, looking very jolly and well. . . . . Go into Cabul to-morrow. . . . .

CABUL, *2nd May*.—Bobs, Griffin, and all the swells came out to meet me this morning; very pleasant. Cabul looks very pretty just now, and everything is going right except as regards political affairs.

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

CABUL, *2nd May* 1880.

I arrived here this morning after getting a grand reception, guard of honour of 92nd Highlanders, etc. Donnie[1] came out to see me, looking very well, but I have hardly had time to speak to him, I have so much to say and do. There is a hitch about the political arrangements, which will probably lead to some little difficulty between me and the Viceroy. . . . . I have suggested to the Viceroy that I be relieved from my command as I could not well stay without political powers. The Viceroy has, till now, led me to believe that I should be supreme.

[1] His son Donald, who had joined his regiment, the 92nd Gordon Highlanders, at Cabul.

I have told Lord Lytton plainly that I would not accept a command of this sort if I were not in the field already. How it will end I don't know. The more I look at the matter, the more certain I feel that I cannot stay here.

Diary, CABUL, *3rd May*.—Telegraphed yesterday to Viceroy about political powers and suggested my own recall. . . . .

4th May.—Telegram received from Viceroy about political charge. Satisfactory. . . . .

A few words are necessary to explain the preceding and other remarks regarding Political affairs. In the early part of the year Mr Lepel Griffin, a distinguished officer of the Bengal Civil Service, had been deputed by the Viceroy to Cabul, as Chief Political Officer. Prior to Mr Griffin's arrival the responsible management of our Political affairs in Northern Afghanistan had devolved entirely on the Military Commander, General Roberts—but to Mr Griffin there had been entrusted a certain power of initiative and control in dealing with the affairs of the Political department, which formed a new element requiring a considerable amount of fine tact on the part of all officers concerned. The precise relations between General Roberts and Mr Griffin had not received any very exact formal official definition, though the position had been explained to both officers in demi-official letters, and verbally to Mr Griffin before he took up his duties. The result was that everything had worked with apparent smoothness between the Military and Political Chiefs up to the time of Sir Donald Stewart's arrival at Cabul. Sir Donald, however, seems to have entertained doubt as to whether the Viceroy

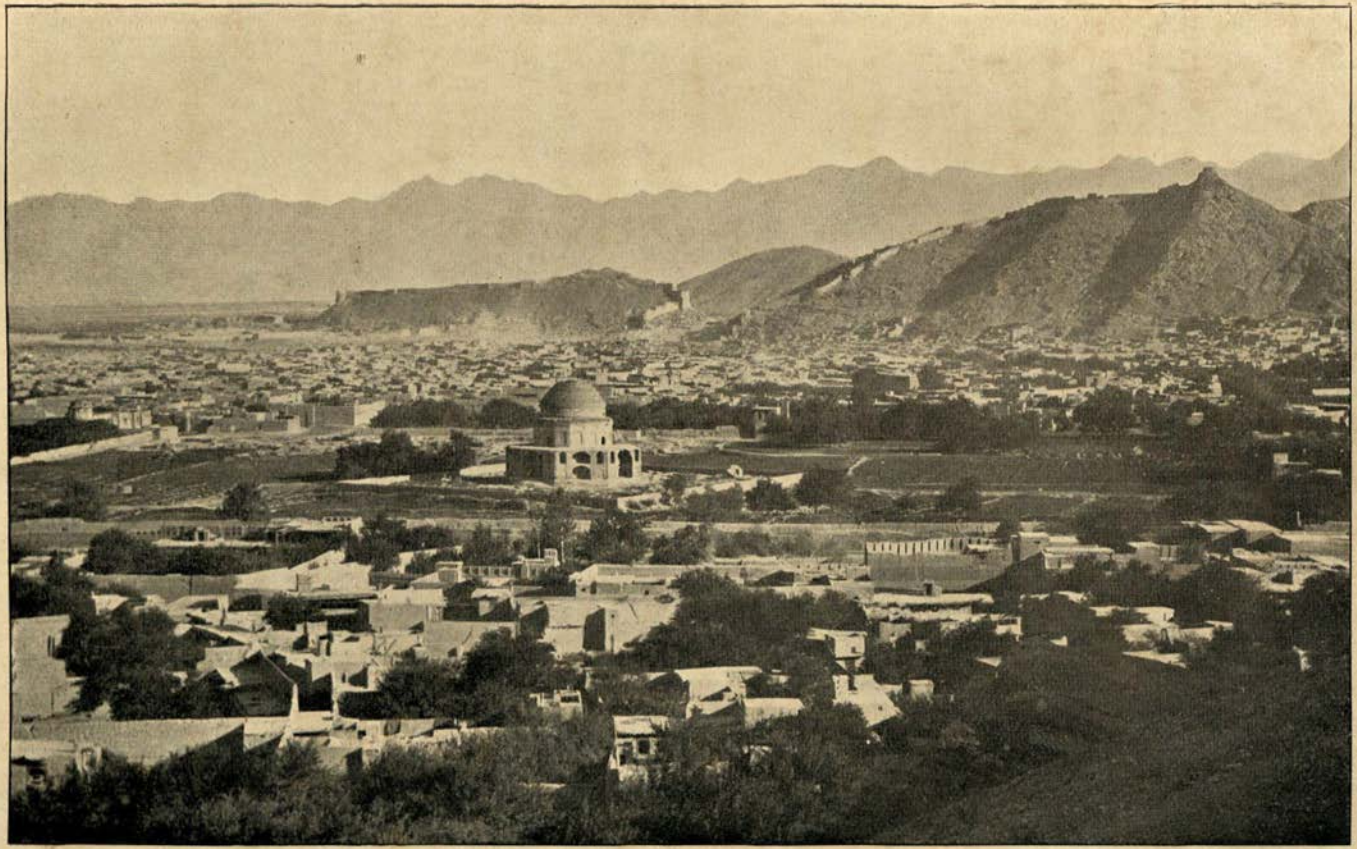
intended him to be absolutely supreme in Political as well as Military affairs—and he lost no time in referring the matter to Lord Lytton, who forthwith sent a reply which made Stewart's supremacy in all departments perfectly clear to him. Some two months later, we find Stewart writing to the Foreign Secretary as follows :—

"Griffin has shown me your letter informing him that my decision in political matters is final. . . . . On all great issues we have never differed, and considering the extraordinary character of our positions, we pull well together, partly, no doubt, because we are both anxious to make a very cumbrous piece of machinery work."

The question of General Stewart's entire supremacy at Cabul appears to have attracted the attention of the Secretary of State for India about this time. In a private letter, dated 9th July, from a high official in the India Office to Stewart, reference is made to a telegram which had been despatched, directing that he should be in supreme political control. This telegram, it is stated, was sent by Lord Hartington, the new Secretary of State, at the suggestion of Lord Northbrook, who considered it essential that Stewart should be supreme in all departments.

Diary, 5th May.—. . . . . Went over the Assenai heights, and had a splendid view of the city.

It was on the 5th May, the date of the diary entry last quoted, that the following most important tidings reached Cabul. The Conservative Government having been defeated in the General Elections, Mr Gladstone and a Liberal Ministry had come into



The City of Cabul. [*To face page* 346.

power. The Marquis of Hartington had become Secretary of State for India. Lord Lytton had resigned the Viceroyalty, and the Marquis of Ripon, having been appointed to succeed him, was about to sail for India. There was, however, to be no change in the immediate policy in regard to Afghanistan. The new Government, like the old, earnestly desired that a capable native ruler might be found to take the reins at Cabul, and also that our army might quit the country with as little delay as possible.

Diary, 6th May.—. . . . . Wrote to Viceroy to-day, and gave my first impressions of Cabul as well as explanation of reference about Griffin's and my own relative positions in political affairs. . . . .

A letter from Simla received about this time says :—

. . . . . We are all very glad indeed to receive the news of your effective scattering of the enemy before Ghuzni. The change of Ministry and of Viceroy has not come very opportunely; nevertheless I cannot think that our new masters can find any objection to our present plans and policy for winding up, as speedily as possible, our affairs in North Afghanistan. . . . .

Diary, 7th May.—. . . . . Arranged that Bobs is to take a column round the Logar and Maidan, chiefly for the collection of supplies, and to remove pressure from Sherpur. . . . .

8th May.—Bobs left for Logar to-day; went to Bala Hissar, and settled all questions of works there: visited hospitals, etc. . . . .

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

CABUL, *9th May* 1880.

. . . . . I thought I might have escaped from this place, but it is not so. The Viceroy said the interests of the

Empire required me to remain here in command, and, as he finally decided that I am to be supreme in all matters, there is nothing for it but to stay. The extraordinary part of the matter is that when I said I would not remain if Griffin was to be independent, the Viceroy said this was never intended, though his telegram almost said as much. . . . .

Sir Donald Stewart to Rev. T. J. L. Warneford.[1]

CABUL, 10*th May* 1880.

I am very glad to hear you are all comfortable in the Logar. I have not yet got over the parting with my Force. Here I am at present, like a fish out of water, and to some extent I shall continue so, as I have no executive command now, having four divisional commanders under me, with a fifth in prospect as soon as we cross the Shutargardan. . . . I had an extraordinary letter from Y—— yesterday, saying that rumours were abroad in camp that I was *not* to have supreme authority in political matters. I don't think he need trouble himself about my position, as I shall take care of that myself; and he and others may be assured that I should not stay here if my position were not a perfectly satisfactory one in all respects. . . . .

Diary, 10*th May*.—. . . Storms brewing in every direction, but I fancy they are stirred up by people in Cabul. . . . .

12*th May*.—Visited city. . . . City dirty, narrow streets, main bazaars covered in and full of life.

13*th May*.—Nothing new to-day. . . . Spent the whole day in receiving visits from Sirdars and others. . . . .

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

14*th May* 1880.

. . . . . I am settling down here in a way, but I don't like the command as well as I did the Candahar one. In

[1] Who had remained at the Logar with the Division from Candahar, when Sir Donald Stewart went on to Cabul.

fact, I have little to say to the troops, because I don't like to interfere with the Generals. I am a sort of Commander-in-Chief. I have now 36,000 men under my command, exclusive of officers, and when I join my communications with Watson,[1] I shall have over 45,000, and of these 13,700 are Europeans. Such a force has never before come under any General commanding in this country. . . .

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

CABUL, 18*th May* 1880.

To-morrow or the next day we expect to hear from Abdul Rahman, or at any rate from the person we have deputed to meet him in Turkestan. He (Abdul Rahman) is now at Khairabad, near Kunduz. Look in the map immediately north of Cabul beyond the Hindu Kush. It is about five days' journey for a man travelling post, and twelve days or less for travellers going the usual stages of 20 or 30 miles daily. It will be something to have the matter settled, whether it is to be peace or war. I don't want the latter, but if we are forced to fight they shall have it hot now that we are so strong. . . . .

Diary, 24th May.—Letter received yesterday from our mission to Abdul Rahman, giving an account of the public and private interviews with Sirdar. He is evidently desirous of coming to terms with us, but wants to know what conditions we desire to impose. . . . .

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

CABUL, 27*th May* 1880.

. . . . . We still wait on Abdul Rahman, and can do nothing nor form any plans till we get his letter. From private accounts we hear that his partisans are plundering the merchants all over Turkestan to raise money for his troops. He keeps out of this himself, because he wishes to appear in the *rôle* of the "benevolent prince"; but his followers

[1] The General commanding at the Kuram.

plunder, unmercifully, and are really devastating the country, if the merchants' letters are to be believed. This will lead Abdul Rahman eventually into difficulties, because the destruction of the trade of the country touches every one high and low. Though Abdul Rahman appears, by his letters and speeches, to be a superior man in many ways, he, like all his family, thinks the people are made for the sole purpose of supplying him with men and money. They are a vile race, and we shall never make anything of them. The more I see of them, the more hateful does their character appear. . . . They all abuse each other, and no name is bad enough for my friend Sher Ali of Candahar. They are, no doubt, jealous of his success; but with all our intelligence we have never found Sher Ali tripping or attempting to play us false, though his family are dead against us. I would not believe Sher Ali further than I could see him. But if one is always on guard, we can't come to much grief.

. . . . . The Ghazis, who fled from our fight at Ghuzni,[1] are roaming all over the country, and will give trouble for a time; but they will eventually settle down. Bobs, who has been marching about the country for the last 20 days, comes back to Cabul to-morrow. He is rather in a state of mind about his future, because he will have no appointment when this force returns to India. . . . .

There is no telling what may happen after Lord Lytton goes. It will be a great shame if they don't do something for Bobs; . . . there can be no doubt about his military capacity. He has done great service here, taking it at the estimate of those who are least friendly to him; and it will be an infamous shame if any petty feeling of jealousy is allowed to stand in his way. There has been great rejoicing all over the country, and especially

[1] Sir Thomas Holdich in his recent work, "The Border Land of India," p. 43, says that these Ghazis were neither Ghilzais nor Hazaras —though the fight took place on the dividing-line between them—but a mob which had followed our army from Candahar, and came originally from a nest of fanatics in Zemindáwar—the real home of Ghazidom.

at Simla, about our successes at Ghuzni; but, honestly, I think some of the enthusiasm is due to the nasty feeling that we have put the Cabul heroes a little in the background. I hate this sort of feeling most cordially; but it exists . . . . I hope the Chief will offer Bobs my Division, which will be vacant in the cold weather, whether I go to Madras or not. Most people seem to think that any change that may be made in the constitution of the Indian armies will not affect the next incumbents in the Madras and Bombay commands. If this is so, I am becoming every day more reconciled to the idea of being a C.-in-C. and an Excellency! Though we could not expect to put by much money, we should have a comfortable life for a time, and, if not too old at the expiration of my time, I ought to get into the Indian Council at home. This is what I should like now, and if I were offered that, I would not accept the Chief Command in Bengal.

30th May.

Yours of the 28th April arrived here yesterday. There is one statement in it that I don't understand. You say, "the Queen has sent her usual congratulations." If she did send them, they never reached me, and we have all thought it odd that H.M. should make such a distinction between ours and the Cabul Force. I don't mind these things myself, but the troops think a good deal of the matter, and I should be sorry if they did not get the message intended for them. It is odd that the *Home News* of this week does not make the slightest allusion to our successes.

I have just been reading the article in *The Times* on our march from Candahar to Ghuzni, and the praise of the compressed forage. I had some of this compressed forage at Candahar, and could not bring it on because we had no carriage to give for any forage. We got plenty of forage on the road for the cutting; our want was food for the natives, of which we never had two days in hand. People in India and England don't know what the feeding of an army means. If I had waited till the Government was ready to give me everything I ought to have had, I should

have been at Candahar now. I thought of sending you the *Pioneer* accounts of our fights. They are not good or very full, but so far as they go, are fair enough. It is a pity that we have not had some good correspondent to give his own view of the matter. They have not yet published my despatches, though they have had them over a fortnight and more. I think this is a pity. I am sure people won't be pleased with what I have said, but I have told the exact truth about what was unfavourable, and I have tried to do justice in those cases where the troops did well. I can't say any behaved downright badly . . . . Bobs, who has returned from his trip into the country, is looking quite himself again. The relief from the worry of political work has been a great blessing to him, though it must at times be a little galling. I am happy to say it has not made the smallest difference between us; but I wish that writers in the newspapers did not so often bring our merits and demerits into contrast. . . . .

. . . . . A telegram has come out from the India Office, directing the Viceroy to give me full political as well as military powers here. Lord L. is somewhat put out about this, and thinks that some one at Cabul must have been telegraphing home about this without the knowledge of the Government of India. Of course no one but myself would have any interest in this matter, and I know that I did not dream of doing anything so disloyal.

. . . . . Meanwhile I have had a very anxious time of it. No definite orders and a good deal of delay, due to change of Government. I am glad you wrote to Bobs . . . . He can't go home now, and I am glad he is going to stay, for many reasons. He is very true to me, and is of great use to me in many ways, and, if there is to be fighting, he will be my right hand. . . . . .

Diary, 29th May.—Attended parade of birthday ceremony, 4221 men on parade; after Royal salute, the troops filed past to Barracks. The 92nd, 4th Gurkhas, and 23rd Pioneers marched past best. . . . . .

30th May.—Went for a long ride with Bobs all round

Seah Sung, and I fancy we must have galloped about eight miles on end.

2nd June.—. . . . . We expect Ibrahim Khan and Sher Mahomed[1] from Turkestan to-day. I hope the letter they bring will indicate the line of policy Abdul Rahman determines to pursue. . . . . Letter from Abdul Rahman is a mere formal receipt of our letter and asks no questions.

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

CABUL, *3rd June* 1880.

. . . . . Yesterday we got Abdul Rahman's first letter, very polite and nice, but contains really nothing! It is a mere friendly acknowledgment of Griffin's letter to him. He is evidently waiting for instructions from Kauffman, at Tashkend. This is the impression of our agent, and it is ours here too. I have asked Government for orders, and have suggested that we forthwith send him an ultimatum. I suppose, as we have gone so far, we must do something of this sort before breaking with him. The papers are quite right about the fights. One was unquestionably the hardest fight of the war, but there is one part of it that has been quite misunderstood, namely, the pursuit. The Cavalry did follow the enemy for miles, but were not allowed to go away altogether, as an advance after the action was determined on, and the Cavalry were required to protect our flank. This could not be all explained in a short message, but it has caused a good deal of misunderstanding, which the publication of the despatches will clear up. . . . . I was rather amused at Mr Onslow asking in the House of Commons whether we gave Sher Ali[2] eight guns and 2000 muskets! Of course it is true; they were given at my recommendation. He said if we did not want to give them he could make them himself; and as we had useless guns and muskets in our stores, and did not know what to do with them, I thought we would make him a very handsome present at *no cost to*

[1] A deputation which had been sent to Abdul Rahman.

[2] The native Governor of Candahar.

ourselves. I have thirty-six guns here all ready to give to the new Amir *when we catch him.* Perhaps they will howl at this at home. Even here, many officers think I should burst them. Of course I could do that; but they would be re-cast within six months of our departure, and probably in a better form than they are in now. I consider them far more dangerous to those who fire them than to the people fired at. Since we came in here we have got up another Officers' mess. Some of our arrangements are a little queer—our candlesticks consist of three brass helmets and four shells. As we believe the latter to be still loaded we are very careful not to let the candles burn near the end. The shells look like bottles, but the group of three helmets in the middle of the table are rather fetching. The helmets are full size, made of brass work, highly ornamented, and the shells are common Armstrong shells for seven-pounder guns. . . . .

Diary, 4th June.—Wrote to Lyall about establishment of a Government here. If Abdul Rahman fails us, I think, on reflection, we had better leave it alone. . . . . I am unable to see that we shall gain by putting up a Government without stability. . . . .

5th June.—Viceroy telegraphed yesterday about retirement, and asked if it could be effected without great risk (military, I presume). I said we were so strong that I could withdraw at any time. Viceroy opposed to Bobs going away from Force till end of war.

6th June.—Have been engaged all day writing a paper on the appointment of an Amir in case Abdul Rahman fails us.

7th June.—Dusty, windy weather. . . . . The days are gradually becoming warmer, though still pleasant in the house. Disturbances in the Khyber.

8th June.—Dined with Bobs last night. We had some music from Captains Gordon and Mercer, and an amusing song by Neville Chamberlain,[1] describing an expedition

[1] Captain, now Colonel, Neville Chamberlain, C.B., nephew of Sir Neville Chamberlain.

into the Mogul country, and what each officer did on the occasion. . . . .

9th June.—. . . . Received visits from Subadar Alam Khan of the 24th N.I., nephew of Futeh Khan Khyberee, who says there is no real likelihood of a general rising in Khyber; at least, he has not heard of it. . . . .

10th June.—Received a very interesting letter from Lord Ripon on our policy in Afghanistan. There is hardly a word in it that I do not thoroughly agree with. . . . .

Extracts from the letter referred to, which was written by Lord Ripon on his journey to assume the Viceroyalty of India, and from General Stewart's reply, may appropriately be given here.

AT SEA, *19th May* 1880.

MY DEAR SIR DONALD STEWART,—I am very anxious to learn from you as soon as possible your views upon our present situation, political and military, in Afghanistan.

It is my intention to address to you, in council, as soon as I can, after taking over the Government from Lord Lytton, some general instructions embodying the views of H.M.'s Government at home, and leaving to you a large discretion as to the mode of carrying them into effect in detail. It will be a great assistance in preparing these instructions if I am already in possession of your mind upon the various questions to be dealt with. It is the desire of the Government to withdraw the troops from Afghanistan as soon as this can be done safely and honourably, with due regard to the health of the Army, and after the establishment at Cabul of the ruler who may seem most likely to be acceptable to the Sirdars and people, and to be able to stand alone when we are gone. . . . . It would be clearly very undesirable, and by no means creditable, for us to withdraw leaving the country in a state of anarchy. It is, I fear, only too likely that the ruler who may be now set up will, before he has been long upon the throne, have to fight for the maintenance of

his authority, and that he will not be firmly seated until he has given proof that he is the strongest man. This, however, we cannot help, and we must in no way bind ourselves to give him any assistance against rivals or rebels, though I should not be averse from supplying him with money, and even to some extent with arms, in the first instance, if it should seem probable that with such aid he would be able to hold his own. As to the individual to be chosen, our main object should be to discover who would be most acceptable to the Afghans themselves, or perhaps I ought to say, to whom they would be the least unwilling to submit. Many persons think that Abdul Rahman would best answer this description; but if any one else, not notoriously hostile to us, would be likely to do better, I should be quite ready to acquiesce in his selection. I do not at all want to have an *English* candidate for the Amirship. Any one who was supposed to have that character would probably become at once unpopular. What seems to me that we ought to desire is, that the country should get the best ruler it can, that our hand should be as little seen as possible in his selection, and that he should appear to be, and should be in reality as much as possible, the choice of the most influential men in the country.

. . . . . It is of course extremely desirable to keep down expense as much as possible, and I am sure that I may rely upon your doing so, but the honour and the health of the troops must be the *first* consideration, and to secure these no necessary expense must be spared. I should be obliged to you to tell me what is the condition of your army both as to efficiency and to health, to what extent the regiments have fallen below their strength, and whether you are satisfied with the commissariat and transport arrangements. H.M.'s Government are very anxious that small isolated expeditions against particular districts, burning of villages, etc., should be as much as possible avoided, as tending to increase the irritation against us, and to render the settlement of the country more difficult. I would apply to political management the same observation which I have made above with respect to military opera-

tions. It is unadvisable to extend our sphere. The despatch of Governors to distant points upon which we have no military hold, and who go there with the show at least of our authority, but without our support, is to be avoided. Our object is not to keep the country, but to withdraw from it, not to govern it ourselves, but to help the inhabitants to set up the best native government that is possible under existing circumstances; and it should be the guiding principle of our policy to keep these two points steadily in view. Writing as I am before my arrival in India, I am well aware that, with more complete information at my command, I may be led to modify my views in many details. You will quite understand that I do not wish you to regard anything which I have said in the nature of an order. It is not my practice in administration to give *orders* in private letters; it seems to me a very unsatisfactory system, and it is one which I have not the least inclination to adopt. I have written to you frankly and without restraint, in order that I may elicit from you an equally frank exposition of your views, whether they agree with or differ from those which I have expressed, and I beg you now, and at all times, to tell me exactly what you think, and never to hesitate to communicate your opinions to me, however much they may differ from my own. It is only by such a free interchange of views with those who are serving under him that a man in my responsible position can arrive at sound final decisions. All that I have heard of you leads me to feel sure that I may place the utmost confidence in your ability and discretion. The task of bringing Afghan affairs to a satisfactory settlement is one of much difficulty and delicacy, and it is a great satisfaction to me to believe that so important a share in the work is entrusted to one so well qualified to perform it.—Believe me, yours faithfully,

RIPON.

P.S.—I shall be obliged to you to write to me to Simla as soon as you are able, as my reason for not waiting to write to you until I have taken up the government, which for many

reasons I should have preferred to do, has been that I am most anxious to be in possession of your views as soon as possible.

From Sir Donald Stewart to the Marquis of Ripon.

CABUL, 11*th June* 1880.

MY LORD MARQUIS,—I have received your Lordship's letter of the 19th May only to-day. . . . . I need not touch on the question of Candahar at present, because I gather from Lord Lytton that since your Lordship's departure from England the present Government has accepted the pledges given by its predecessors on that point. With regard to our general policy, it cannot be disputed that we are under some moral obligation to give North Afghanistan some sort of settled government before we quit Cabul, but I do not think that we ought to remain here indefinitely for that purpose. The main objects of the war having been secured, we ought to leave the question of the future government of the country as far as possible to the people. With this qualification we are bound to do all we can in the time at our disposal towards the establishment of a settled Government. We are to some extent committed to continue our negotiations with Abdul Rahman, and this being so, our obvious course is to bring him to book at once, by stating distinctly the conditions on which we are prepared to acknowledge him as Amir of Afghanistan. I am very strongly of opinion that we should abstain from entering into any treaty arrangements with him or any other ruler at present. No man can expect to rule at Cabul till he has given proof of his ability to hold his own against all comers, and as a contest seems inevitable, it follows that there is something to be said for leaving the Afghans to fight their quarrel out among themselves. As this course seems opposed to European and Indian sentiment, I do not press it, though I am personally inclined to advocate it. Assuming then that we ought to put up a Government of some sort, there are only two parties from which a representative ruler can be taken—viz. the party of which Abdul Rahman is now the recog-

nised chief, and the party of Sher Ali as represented by his sons Yakub and Ayub and others.

If we could place any dependence on the adherence of Abdul Rahman to a policy which should be friendly towards ourselves, and therefore one of abstention from alliances or influences hostile to the British Government, he would be the best man to support, as he is unquestionably the ablest and the most enlightened of the candidates. . . . . It is of the utmost importance, therefore, that we should ascertain what his real designs are without delay, for if he fails us, we must be prepared to give our support to another candidate, or quit the field, leaving the Afghans to settle the matter among themselves. . . . . With regard to the question of frontier, I am strongly of opinion that we should decline to discuss this matter just now, either with Abdul Rahman or any other candidate for the Cabul throne. Candahar has been permanently detached from Afghanistan, and the tracts assigned to us under the Treaty of Gundamak ought to be retained in our possession for future consideration. The question of frontier is a most important one, and we ought not to give up an inch of territory without the fullest deliberation. At the same time I am strongly of opinion that we should not keep a single soldier in the Kuram or Khyber. There are various ways of disposing of the Kuram, but I would not advise your Excellency to take up the question in a hurry as it does not press, and it may be well to obtain very complete information on all the bearings of the case before action is taken on it. The western portion of the Kuram from the Peiwar to Shutargardan, we can dispose of as we like, but we are under an engagement not to place the eastern portion of the district under the control of a Durani again. We can, however, place it under any other native ruler if we do not care to administer it ourselves. We are also bound to hold the Khyber in our own hands by agreement with the Afridi tribes, but I believe there will be no difficulty in fulfilling our pledge on this point. . . . .

. . . . . I have not touched on the questions raised by your Excellency regarding Candahar, for the reasons given

in the early part of this letter; but if any of the points on which my opinion has been asked are still open, I shall be happy to give it unreservedly, because I am familiar with the subject. With respect to Herat too, I believe Her Majesty's Government has decided to let the province go with the rest of Northern Afghanistan. I consider this a wise decision, as it relieves us from a responsibility which could not fail to be embarrassing in the highest degree.

I now take up the question of our withdrawal from Cabul. There seems to be a universal impression that our retirement would be the signal for a general outbreak of an anarchical character. But I cannot myself see the ground upon which this impression is founded. As a matter of fact, the village system of Afghanistan makes the country independent of a Central Government, and there is no more anarchy or confusion now in the districts which are not occupied by our troops than there used to be in the Amir's time. There will be disturbances in Cabul itself, and the troops may be annoyed as they retire if a Government has not been established before we leave, but anything like general anarchy need not be expected. . . . .

Before closing this letter I would wish to remove the impression that your Excellency seems to entertain regarding the punishment inflicted by the troops on the people of this country. I am assured by Sir F. Roberts that during our occupation of Cabul, only one village has been burnt and destroyed by the troops. In several cases the towers of individuals have been blown up as a punishment, but the reports that have reached England regarding the destruction of villages are, with the above-mentioned exception, entirely false. I am entirely opposed to this sort of punishment myself, because it fails to reach the guilty people, but the destruction of a man's tower is often the only way we have of repressing disorder; but this is a very different thing from a general punishment which falls on the innocent and guilty alike.

The health of the troops is very good, and they are in excellent spirits, but it would be impolitic to keep the native regiments another winter in this country. They are

very home-sick, and it will not do to try them too much. The hardships they have undergone have had a marked effect on the popularity of the Service, and nothing should induce your Excellency to sanction our remaining in Afghanistan another winter.

The troops can, as a matter of fact, be withdrawn at any time, and I do not consider that the season should be allowed to influence our movements one way or the other. I have served with troops in India during two consecutive hot seasons, and I should have no hesitation in putting troops into the field at any time of the year and in any part of the country. I am no advocate for a precipitate retreat, but I think we should not delay a day beyond the time required by the political necessities of the case.

Your Excellency's views regarding the restrictions of our military and political operations to the narrowest sphere accord so closely with those of Lord Lytton that they fall in harmoniously with our present proceedings here. . . . .

Diary, 11*th June*.—Answered Lord Ripon's letter to-day at length, and also wired.

13*th June*.—No orders yet from Simla. . . . . Orders received to send an ultimatum to Abdul Rahman; orders very clear.

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

CABUL, 13*th June* 1880.

. . . . . I send you a sketch from Martin Martin, which will amuse you. A little Afghan boy at once spotted me when I asked him to name the figures—he said Chapman was "Bobs." I think it is very like Chappy. We are getting through the summer nicely, and I shall be rejoiced when the order for the march back arrives. . . . .

From Lieutenant Martin Martin, R.E., to Sir Donald Stewart.

HISSARAK, 12*th June* 1880.

MY DEAR DONALD,—I hear you are to be the new Amir, and hasten to offer you my congratulations. As

you will probably be photographed before being "done in oils," I send you a design for positions. The two figures are most orthodox, and though the lions are rather uncomfortable at first (indeed Lord Northbrook always found them so[1]), still they make you point your toes in the approved style. Chapman will of course officiate with the peacock's feathers. The chief nobles of the country advance to offer salutations in the graceful manner prevalent in the East,—Your affectionate cousin,

MARTIN MARTIN.

N.B.—Please ask the photographer to have a background paper of a diaper pattern. This is *de rigueur.*

Diary, 14th June.—Orders received yesterday afternoon to send an ultimatum to Abdul Rahman; everything very clear except the question of time to be allowed for an answer. This we wired for yesterday, but have got no answer. Rumours of gatherings in every quarter continue. . . . .

15th June.—. . . . . Letter received from Abdul Rahman saying he is coming in; at the same time gatherings are taking place in his name. Ordered Hills into Charasia.

16th June.—. . . . . Nothing new here about troops of Ghazis coming from Ghuzni. There are men about, no doubt, but not in the numbers stated, which are always grossly exaggerated. . . . .

17th June.—Wrote to Lyall to-day, saying that I understood the wishes of Government about withdrawal, and did not want further instructions. . . . . .

18th June.—There seems to be a good deal of excitement about Ghuzni still, and evidently in favour of Musa Khan. . . . . .

19th June.—Ghuzni Field Force came to Zaidabad to-day, and marches to-morrow to Charasia. It is alleged that the move will have a bad effect, but that can't be helped. It is necessary, and is better than moving it in the middle of hostile operations.

[1] As Viceroy, Lord Northbrook often had to sit on lion-armed chairs of state at durbars.

A Scottish Amir—a vision. [*To face p.* 362.

20th June.—News of gatherings about in all parts of the country. . . . . .

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

CABUL, *20th June* 1880.

. . . . . One thing is clear, a crisis is approaching, and we shall have a settlement or a fight. . . . . Our object is not to rouse the country just now, but to keep things quiet till we see what Abdul Rahman intends to do. . . . . Hills and a lot of the Candahar people came in here to-day to see Cabul, all delighted with the place, because they can get iced pegs and fruit, as well as salad and vegetables. The only vegetable in camp is young *clover!* I have been eating this myself as spinach without knowing what it was. As you seem to be having to feed so many people, why not try clover? It must be cheap in Devonshire, and is very wholesome. We are waiting as patiently as we can for news of Abdul Rahman's proceedings. He would get our letter yesterday, telling him exactly the terms on which we are ready to hand over Cabul to him—and till we get his answer we must rest on our oars. Meantime, all the rascals in the country are collecting round us, and annoying us to the utmost of their power. The wretches won't fight, but they stop our supplies, and annoy us in that way. Fortunately the crops are being cut, and in ten or fifteen days we shall get the new grain. . . . .

Diary, 23rd June.—Spent most of my day in talking to officers of Candahar Force who came in to see Cabul. Weather getting hotter daily, and it is now nearly at summer heat.

24th June.—Went out to Charasia this morning to see Hills and the Third Division; all were looking well and jolly. . . . .

26th June.—. . . . . Reply from Abdul Rahman received to-day.

27th June.—Abdul Rahman's reply is most deceptive; he pretends that we have promised him the kingdom of Dost Mahomed, and our agent says he means mischief.

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

CABUL, 29*th June* 1880.

The situation here is not much changed, and we are in for another wearisome spell of ten days or so of uncertainty.

Abdul Rahman has professedly accepted our offer, but he talks about the kingdom of his grandfather having been made over to him, whereas we distinctly told him that the Province of Candahar and the districts assigned to us by the treaty of Gundamak were not included in our offer. It is not easy to see what he means by this pretence, but it gives him the advantage of further delay, which is precisely what we are striving to avoid. To make matters worse, some of the leading Sirdars, who were friendly to us before, have bolted on hearing that we proposed giving Candahar to Abdul Rahman, and they will give us no end of trouble along the road, unless we can convince them that their fears are groundless, and that they had better return to their families. All this worry drives everything else out of my head, and I can think of little but the complications that surround us. . . . .

I have had a good deal of bother, because I did not mention X. and Y. in my despatches. The latter came to argue the point with me, and I gave him a very short answer. . . . . The fact is that people think they have a right to be mentioned whether they do well or ill; and as I think differently, I act on my own view. It would no doubt be more pleasant to praise everybody all round, and that is practically what most people do. . . . .

30*th June.*

. . . . . We have at last got final orders about Abdul Rahman. I am to send him a letter to-morrow morning requesting him to come in, and if he does not do so, I am to assemble all the chiefs of Afghanistan, and leave them to settle the matter for themselves. This will bring things to a crisis one way or another, so you will know in ten days or so from this what our prospects are. . . . .

Diary, 29th June.—. . . . . Wrote to General Watson, Kuram, about our retirement. . . . . .

30th June.—. . . . . Received telegram from Foreign Office, giving final instructions about Abdul Rahman, and authorising me what to do in the event of a rupture. Our agent, Mahomed Afzul, is also expected to-night very opportunely, as the tone of our letter will be regulated by what we hear from him. . . . .

1st July.—. . . . . We expected Mahomed Afzul in last night, and why he has not arrived it is difficult to say. . . . .

2nd July.—Palliser had a fight yesterday against some 1500 men from Zoormut, chasing them over the hills, and killing 200. Barrow has been badly wounded in both arms, three men killed, and 24 wounded. Wrote to Lord Ripon and Lyall after my interview with Mahomed Afzul, who, on the whole, gives a very satisfactory account of Abdul Rahman.

3rd July.—Great change in the weather owing to snow-storm in the Hindu Kush. . . . . .

5th July.—Received a long letter from Lord Lytton to-day. . . . .

The letter from Lord Lytton, who, although he had ceased to be Viceroy, had not yet left India, concludes as follows :—

. . . . . I have left with Lord Ripon a written record of my high and grateful appreciation of your experience and ability, not only as a Military Commander, but also as an administrator and political adviser. I hope these abilities will not long be wasted on the Madras Command. Pray believe how sincerely and regretfully I sympathise with you in all the anxieties and vexations of your present command, and how warm are my good wishes for your welfare and success in all undertakings.

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

CABUL, *5th July* 1880.

Our agent, Mahomed Afzul, has returned from Turkestan, and brings good news on the whole about Abdul Rahman. He says Abdul Rahman really means to act on the square

with us, as the Russians are not at present in a position to do anything for him, being in difficulties themselves with the Chinese, who have twice defeated them near Goolcha and Fort Narin. The certainty of Abdul Rahman's coming in here is so far satisfactory, and if he is able to hold his own after we retire, the settlement will be tolerably favourable. At the same time we must not be too confident, as there are big gatherings all around which may give us much trouble yet before we clear out. A peaceful arrangement will please the Government best, but whether it can be effected is another matter. . . . . .

6th July.

To-day I went up to the top of a hill looking down on Tezeen end of the Khoord Cabul Pass; there is a very peculiar minar on the top of the hill which we were all anxious to see, and so we made a reconnaissance at the same time for military purposes. We had a magnificent day for our trip, and the views were magnificent, including the snows of the Hindu Kush. The minars are evidently of Buddhist origin, but the Cabulees can give no information about them beyond the fact that they were built by Kafirs, which include Jews, Christians, and pagans of all sorts. Barring the view and the cutting, there was not much to be seen by an outsider, but the view of a country which is shortly to be the theatre of a fight was interesting to me and those who are likely to be engaged in it.[1] . . . .

Diary, 7th July.—. . . . The news all over the country is tolerably satisfactory. . . . . Making calculations for retirement, which will begin, I hope, by this day month.

8th July.—Abdul Rahman is to be at Charikar to-morrow and a Brigade will now be pitched at Anslar, so as to show the people that we are ready for contingencies from either north or south. I believe Abdul Rahman is acting on the square with us. Heard from Lord Ripon yesterday; his letter crossed mine and has been practically anticipated. Dr Smith making arrangements for sending down sick at end of the month.

[1] This anticipation of possible disturbances was, fortunately, not realised.

9th July.—Arranged to-day with Dr Smith for sending away sick to India. Those of Khyber line will go by detachments daily, while those from Cabul will go in one or two parties. General Macpherson's Brigade went into camp to-day at Chardeh just to be prepared for accidents. Abdul Rahman arrives at Charikar to-day.

10th July.—Received visits all day from natives. Tahir, who was one of them, still holds that Abdul Rahman will not come to Cabul. He is certainly very slow in his movements, and for my own part I see no good in his coming to Cabul till we leave, unless he does so in a friendly spirit.

12th July.—Bobs and Neville Chamberlain dined with me last night. There seems to be a sort of scare about our going away; why I don't know, as the matter has been under consideration for months. Abdul Rahman coming along very slowly; he left Kinjan only on Saturday, the 10th, and does not expect to be at Charikar before Wednesday, 14th.

13th July.—No news of importance to-day; everywhere the people are maintaining an attitude of expectation. I have written to Bright to urge on him the need for stocking all the posts with grain and forage preparatory to our retirement. . . . .

14th July—. . . . . Abdul Rahman is expected at Tutan Durra to-day; it is not clear whether he comes here or to Purwan. Arrangements for retirement continue; people quiet all round.

15th July.—A shock of an earthquake occurred to-day at twenty-eight minutes past three P.M. No particular news except that Abdul Rahman crossed the Hindu Kush; his letters continue to be friendly. . . . .

16th July.—A long cipher message arrived to-day from Foreign Office in regard to my demi-official letter of the 5th inst. I gather from it that we are not to enter into any treaty. . . . .

17th July.— . . . . Wrote a congratulatory letter to Abdul Rahman.

19th July.—Yesterday received letter from Mushki-

Alam and a number of insurgent chiefs, that they are ready to acknowledge any Amir we like to recognise. This is a great success if it is a genuine and sincere request, and it has the appearance of being so. . . . .

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

CABUL, *20th July* 1880.

Our proceedings with Abdul Rahman are going on capitally, and I really think we shall be on the move about the 10th August. I think people will be glad to get out of this, as all excitement is over.

The people, too—except the robbers and scoundrels of all sorts, who have been loose all over the country for the last two years—are sick of the present state of anarchy, and anxious for peace. My only fear is that Abdul Rahman will not be able to hold his own in the end. A good deal will depend on the movements and success of Ayub,[1] who is professedly advancing against Candahar. I cannot myself believe that he proposes to attack our troops, because, if he does so, he must ruin his cause. But if he pushes on to Ghuzni now, his troops will give him a great preponderance over Abdul Rahman, and may make the position of the latter here untenable after a short time. This is why I am anxious to get out of the country before the row begins, because we cannot take part with either side, and, if our friend fails, it will bring us a certain amount of discredit. If I had my own way I should have left the different parties to fight it out. Now, if our friend goes to the wall, which is exceedingly probable, we shall be blamed for having anything to say to him.

I suppose I shall go to Madras. You know I am not very keen about Council, and the more I see of military administration the less I care to have anything to do with it.

They sometimes talk of my being Commander-in-Chief

[1] Ayub Khan, son of the Amir Sher Ali Khan, who still held possession of Herat.

in India. It is not, however, on the cards, and I know it. About other rewards I think little. They will make me a Grand Cross of the Bath, no doubt, but that is about all. Of course people say such and such rewards were given to Pollock, Sir W. Gilbert, and others; but, somehow, in the present day, the Government is more chary of its favours, unless there is some political triumph to be gained, and, unfortunately for those concerned, the Afghan war has lost all interest for people in England, who think nothing of the incessant and heavy work which is still imposed on the troops, especially on the line of communication.

I shall be very thankful when this business is over. Somehow my work is never-ending, and Lord Ripon is always asking for reports on questions which must be published and, therefore, require great care and thought. He has asked me to write a paper on our engagements with Candahar—a subject which ought to be better understood by the Foreign Office than by myself; though, no doubt, the policy of the Government in regard to Candahar has to some extent been framed on my advice. Besides this, I have to write constantly to the Foreign Office and the Viceroy of the current events here; and, one way and another, my time is so fully occupied that I cannot get my evening ride. Of course what cuts up my days is the visits of Afghan Sirdars, who come at all times and seasons. I am obliged to see them, and talk to them too; and it is only when my patience is exhausted that I can tell them to go, for they never seem inclined to move of their own accord. You ask why I did not keep Chapman. The reason was that MacGregor, who was chief of the Staff here, came naturally to me as the Senior Staff Officer. I would prefer Chapman to any one, but I was obliged to consult the wishes of the Commander-in-Chief, and he chose MacGregor, Chapman going to Bobs. . . . . Chapman is out and out the best man I have ever met. I can't tell you how I miss him. . . . . I shall be thankful when I get rid of the whole thing, at Peshawur. I had, of course, to leave all the Staff of the Candahar Force with that Force, including Warneford. It would have been impossible to

have removed Adams[1] simply to please myself. However, the Candahar, or Ghuzni Division, as it is now called, comes in here about the 1st August, and marches down with me in the post of honour, as the rearguard.

I got a very nice letter from Lord Lytton before he left India. Though I did not always agree with him, I never lost his full confidence, and one of the last things he did was to put it on record that, if he had remained in power, he would have left the entire management of affairs here in my hands. Lord Ripon has evidently taken the same view, for he always backs me up in everything. . . . . I am very disgusted to find that people continue to compare Bobs and myself. I know it must vex him, and it certainly vexes me, but fortunately it never interferes with our intercourse. . . . .

Diary, 20th July.—Arrangements being made for a durbar to recognise Abdul Rahman as Amir. The Government are very nervous about the measure, and are afraid of committing themselves too much, but there was really no other way of recognising him.

21st July.— . . . . Durbar to-morrow, to announce our recognition of Abdul Rahman as Amir of Cabul.

22nd July.— . . . . I have to make a short speech to the durbar, and wind up with a short address, advising them all to assist the new ruler in restoring peace and quietness throughout the country, and to lay aside private quarrels and unite in this very desirable object.

23rd July.—I have wasted most of my day talking. The durbar went off yesterday very well on the whole, and I am glad to say that the reading of the Khutba[2] was rather successful, and so was the address given afterwards by the chief Moolla of the city.

26th July.—Went to see sick convoy under Major Kingsley before it started; everything reported complete.

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[1] The Rev. J. W. Adams, V.C., then Chaplain to the Forces at Cabul, now Hon. Chaplain to H.M. the King.

[2] The public prayer for the ruler of the country, the name of Abdul Rahman being now used for the first time.

Amir requests that interview may take place at Zimma or somewhere near it. Roberts returns to-morrow from Jelalabad; everything quiet except that telegraph line is being constantly cut by the Khairo Khels.

27th July.—Country quiet, and everything going on satisfactorily. Abdul Rahman seems disposed to take advice and act on it. He is trying his best to conciliate every one, but it is hardly to be expected that he should succeed with all. Our proceedings with Abdul Rahman are approved by Government.

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

CABUL, *27th July* 1880.

. . . . . All our arrangements for making a start about the 10th August are being completed, but some of the regiments will go before then. I can hardly believe that we are to get out of this country without trouble, and yet everything looks bright and promising at this moment. Abdul Rahman seems sensible, and is certainly taking advice well and kindly—and for his own sake, if not for ours, I hope he will be a success. It is a regular lottery though, and many knowing people (Afghans) swear he will never be able to hold his own. His opponents have no money, but they have plenty of arms, and I fancy ammunition too, and if he is a wise man, he will try and get all men with arms into his service. . . . .

CHAPTER XXIII

THE EXODUS FROM CABUL.

On the 28th July General Stewart begins his diary thus : "No news of importance from the country; all *seems* to be quiet, and will, I hope, remain so." Later in the day he continues: "Heard to-day by telegram of entire defeat and dispersion of General Burrows' force by Ayub Khan. General Primrose evacuated cantonment (of Candahar) and retired to Fort. Small parties of men and officers are coming into Candahar. St John safe. This is the worst misfortune that can happen to us here. It is impossible to say how Abdul Rahman will take it!" Thus in less than a week from the assumption of the Amirship by Abdul Rahman and the acceptance of the fact by the British Government, and also apparently by the most important of the chiefs and people of Cabul and its vicinity, we find a rival claimant, viz. Ayub Khan, younger brother of Yakub Khan, carrying everything before him in his invasion of Southern Afghanistan.

It is true that rumours of an advance by Ayub Khan had reached Cabul, and are mentioned in General Stewart's letter of the 20th July, but no great importance seems to have been attached to

the movement by our officers in Northern Afghanistan. Eight days later the news of the disaster at Maiwand came upon them like thunder from a clear sky.

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

28th July 1880.

I have just heard the most distressing news from Candahar. I can hardly believe that a whole brigade of troops has been practically destroyed. It is not fair to criticise matters, but I think it was unwise to send such a small force from Candahar. Still, I can't help thinking that if well handled, they must have defeated Ayub. It is a sad winding up of the campaign, and I can't help thinking of the misfortunes it will bring in its wake, unless the mischief is repaired at once. I don't know what Government will do, because they still will have great difficulty in re-inforcing Candahar at present, and the railway seems to have broken down just at the time it was wanted. . . . .

Diary, 29th July.—. . . . . Making preparations for sending a force to Candahar *vid* Ghuzni ; . . . . everything must give way to military necessities of the case.

30th July.—Nothing new to-day. The news of the Candahar affair has created quite a sensation in England, and as usual there is a call for Sir. G. Wolseley! I thought this would be the result of asking for re-inforcements from home. It is perfectly absurd talking about our supremacy in Afghanistan as if it were ever questioned.

31st July.—Heard from Lord Ripon to-day about the durbar and its results. His Excellency approves generally of what we have done, which is something. Amir seems disinclined to meet me in our camp. Came to Gough's camp this evening.

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

CABUL, 31*st July* 1880.

. . . . . I write this while waiting till Cunliffe Martin and Bobs have worked out a long cipher message from Griffin for the Foreign Office, describing his interview with Abdul Rahman. Griffin is much taken with Abdul Rahman's intelligence and nice manners. Unfortunately, like all Afghans, he wants everything from us, and all he has to give in exchange is the chance of his friendship. The fact is we have made a mess of the business, I fear, and have been wasting our time on a man who has no real strength of his own. All this may, of course, be put on by him for the purpose of obtaining from us what we do not want to give, viz. rifles and guns; but it may also be perfectly true, and, if it be so, our friend is weak indeed. I see that there has been a regular scare in England over the Candahar business. It is quite sickening to see the newspapers talking about our supremacy in Afghanistan, and the necessity of sending out Sir G. Wolseley . . . .

GOUGH'S CAMP.

. . . . . Of course we are all thinking of what is going on at Candahar. . . . . Native reports received at Quetta do not make out the business to be so bad as was at first represented; but there can be no doubt about the complete defeat of the Brigade, and the loss of prestige, even if the loss in officers and men has not been so great as was at first said. As yet we only know of the loss of six officers, and that can hardly be said to be excessively great, considering the complete dispersion of the force. Indeed, the whole affair looks as if it had been mismanaged; but there is this to be said—that the force was always too small, considering the strength of the enemy in artillery. This was well known, and General Primrose should have taken out his whole force, and gone himself in command. There may have been good reasons for acting as Primrose did, but I can't see them. I know that I always intended

to leave a small force in the Citadel, and take out my *whole* Division if Ayub had come down from Herat, as he often threatened to do in my time. No doubt Primrose sees this himself now. However, the present question is the relief of Candahar and the defeat of Ayub. I have a fine force ready for the work, and Bobs would go in command of it. I know it would beat Ayub into a cocked hat; but there are objections to sending a force away by itself through a country which is sure to be hostile, and we should rouse animosities, which would bring about further complications, and, perhaps, prevent our withdrawal from Cabul. Still, if the work cannot be done from the Quetta side, *our* troops must be employed, whatever the risks and inconveniences may be. Bobs is very eager to go, and I don't wonder; though people say it is not the right thing to do. It is what we did last winter with a much smaller and less efficient force than the one I have now told off. I am giving Bobs nine regiments of Infantry, while I had only seven; and he will have three European regiments of Infantry to my two, and the 9th Lancers in addition. He will also have two Gurkha and two Sikh regiments; so his force in fighting power will be nearly twice as strong as my Division, good though it was. Still, it is only fair to give him the best of everything, and risk as little as possible. Griffin's interview is now going on, and I told him to speak out and tell the Amir in plainest terms what we propose to do, and what we cannot do. There is no use in beating about the bush, and the sooner the Amir knows the exact position with regard to us the better. . . . .

1st August.

This miserable Amir is keeping us waiting for a decision about the proposed meeting. I don't care about the matter myself; but it will not do him much good, and it shows that either he or those about him do not like to trust him with us. However, all our business arrangements are completed, and there is nothing more to be done. I shall return to Cabul to-morrow morning, and complete my plans for retirement, which will, I hope, begin on or about the

10th August. Even if a force has to go to Candahar, it won't affect our plans materially.

3rd August.

The order has come at last for a move on Candahar. Bobs goes in command, with General Ross as second in command. Cunliffe Martin's regiment[1] goes with the force; I shall be abused for sending it, but that does not signify. I see they are sending troops from all parts of India to Candahar, and that there is something like a regular scare at home. It is a great pity, because every one will think we are in a bad way. This is a grand thing for Bobs. If there is any fighting, he can't help being successful, and his success must bring him great credit. . . . .

Diary, CAMP KILLA HAJI, *1st August.*—Conversation[2] with Abdul Rahman not quite satisfactory. He is much weaker than we expected, and wants guns, money, and rifles, etc., etc. Visit not yet arranged for; not very hot in camp.

CABUL, *2nd August.*—Returned here this morning. Late last night it was ascertained that Abdul Rahman could only pay me a visit by deceiving those who were opposed to it. On these terms I declined his visit, as I did not wish to sow dissension among his followers. The Ghilzais said they would leave him in a body if he paid his visit. Kohistanis and others agreed to the proposal.

3rd August.—A force ordered to move on Candahar as soon as possible. Bobs will go with 3 Brigades Infantry, 3 Batteries Royal Artillery, and Brigade of Cavalry. Races to-day, and I can't go down to see my cup run for! No one could have foreseen the Candahar muddle. Wrote letters all day.

4th August.—Busy making preparations for departure of General Roberts' force, which will start on Sunday if possible. The rest of the force will march to Boodkhak on

[1] The Central India Horse.

[2] This evidently relates to the meeting of Abdul Rahman and Mr Griffin referred to in the letter just quoted.

Tuesday. There will be a regular struggle to get away on Tuesday, but I think it may be done. In fact, it must be done. . . . .

6th August.—Dined last night with Griffin, who made a grand speech about Bobs. Bobs ditto in reply. Very busy getting everything ready for march. Things continue to look well. Bothered with visitors.

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

CABUL, *7th August* 1880.

I began this hours ago, and have not yet got to the second line. When it will be finished I know not, but when Bobs' force moves towards Candahar, I suppose I shall get a little time to myself. In getting ready a force for Candahar there have been numberless demands on my good nature. Every one thinks he ought to get what he wants, and if he does not get it he thinks himself ill-used. Then there are all sorts of jealousies to meet and smooth over. It is a weary business, and, coming as it does, just when the evacuation of Cabul is taking place, my life is a sore one. Then all on my Staff are swept off, and I have now a complete new set, who know little of their business. Fortunately, I am very independent of Staff, and don't much care who I have so long as they understand how to carry out an order when they get it. . . . . *They*[1] don't believe that we can leave Cabul so soon as I proposed, and I think they don't quite understand what we are doing here. . . . . Bobs had a telegram from his wife congratulating him on his appointment to the command of the Candahar column. It is lucky he did not go home when he first thought of it, as he would have missed the best chance of the campaign. He is now in great delight with his troops, which are really the pick of the Army. I gave them all a farewell order, but, as usual, I did not say I was sorry to part with them, all which is a regular thing to do. Of course I am sorry to

[1] The Simla authorities.

say "Good-bye" to any one, but then I don't care to expose my feelings to the public gaze.

8th August.

Bobs' troops move into camp to-day, and they go off to-morrow. The withdrawal of my rear division will take place on Wednesday, and right glad I shall be when we are fairly out of this. My last month here has been anything but a pleasant one; I have had an infinite deal of trouble of all sorts. . . . . Things are going very quietly here, at least outwardly they are so, but how long they will remain so is another matter. A man carrying letters for Bobs' camp yesterday says that he was stopped five or six miles out of this by armed men, but as they did not make any attempt to take his letter-bags, I am just a little dubious about the truth of his story. However, we hope to get down country without any disturbance, and that will be a grand point. . . . .

Diary, 9th August.—Went out to Beni Hissar last evening to say good-bye to all friends; was received with cheers by most of the troops, especially my old regiments of the Candahar force. Everything going on quietly, and it seems the Amir wishes to see me on Wednesday. Bobs' force marches to-day to Moossai and positions beyond that.

10th August.—Moved into tents in Sherpur last night. The Amir is to meet me to-morrow morning at a spot near the cantonments, and will probably move into Cabul himself as soon as we are out of sight.

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

CABUL, *10th August.*

I have just had a heliogram from Bobs saying that all is well in his camp. He is about 30 miles off. I shall try and keep up communication with him as far as Ghuzni, for, if he is not opposed then, he will not meet any enemy of any importance till he gets near Candahar. As soon as I get to Jelalabad I shall ask leave to proceed to India, for Hills can carry out the details as well as I can.

BOODKHAK, *11th August* 1880.

Before leaving Cabul I had an interview with the Amir, who had come to see me after all. We met in a tent just outside the gate of the fort, where my quarters were. He was a little nervous at first, but soon recovered himself, and behaved with great dignity. He was much pleased with everything, and desired me to express his thanks to the Viceroy for all our kindness to him. Our march was quite undisturbed—so very different from what it was in 1842. I have just been reading Lady Sale's harrowing account of the retirement in that year. I am very much amused at the telegrams from home about the retirement. Up to the time the row took place at Candahar, people were urging withdrawal, and now they are trying to thwart me in every way. I made up my mind two months ago to leave this about the 10th August, and I would have left it to a day had not Bobs' march been delayed about twenty-four hours, and I wanted to give him two full days' start. Then they did not want us to have anything to say to the tribes, and now, forsooth, they want to know if we have made arrangements for protecting tribes who were friendly to us! There is not a single friendly tribe in the country, except, perhaps, the Hazaras, and they only care for what they can get out of us. The truth is, few people in India or England understand what is doing here, and they talk the greatest nonsense in the House of Commons as well as in the newspapers. I have just had a note from Bobs, who says he is getting on swimmingly, and all well. Please tell Lady Bobs, as this is the latest news. I shall try and send letters to him through the Amir, up to Ghuzni, at any rate. He will be there three or four days hence. If he has no fight then, I fancy his march will be unopposed.

LUTTA BUND, *12th August.*

Yours of the 13th July received to-day. You have heard that we are going to leave Cabul, but you don't believe it. However, here we are; no news, everything going on all right as yet.

Diary, BOODKHAK, 11*th August*.—Met the Amir this morning in a tent near Sherpur. Interview went off very well. Amir was a little morose at first, but he recovered himself quickly, and conducted himself with a good deal of dignity. Retirement of troops effected with great regularity—not a shot fired.

CAMP, LUTTA BUND, 12*th August*.—A rather weary march, but road—new one—good. A good deal of confusion still in the baggage arrangements. . . . . Cabul quiet, and arrangements made for entry of Amir on Sunday next.

CAMP, SEH BABA, 13*th August*.—A long tedious march, and part of the way by a very bad road. There is nothing to mark the different routes. Encamped in the bed of a torrent. It is to be hoped there will be no rain in the hills. Received Viceroy's congratulations on evacuation of Cabul to-day.

JUGDULLUCK, 14*th August*.—Went through the Panidurral defile—very beautiful, but not a strong pass. A few men on the hill-tops would make it quite safe. Camp very dirty in every way; country still quiet.

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

CAMP, PIZWAN, 15*th August* 1880.

. . . . . Our march has so far been prosperous in that there has not been a hitch anywhere. . . . . The withdrawal from Cabul was always a ticklish job, but it has turned out well as yet. However, we are not out of the wood, and I shall say nothing on that head till the job is completed. The heat in camp is not nearly so great as I expected, and the men are as jolly as possible, because their faces are turned in the right direction. . . . . The English papers are as foolish as the Indian ones about our retirement, and are doing their best to make people believe that we have been driven out, though we have many months ago declared that our only object in remaining at Cabul was to see a Government of some sort established. Well, we have

got our Government and Amir too, who could not begin his reign till we vacated his capital; and that being so, our remaining at Cabul was out of the question. As the new Amir wanted us out of his country, I considered it best to meet his wishes. Besides, we had only food for another week or two, and there was no use in trying to bring more from the rear. I always intended to get out of Cabul about the 10th August, and my plans were so far successful that I stuck to my day notwithstanding the outbreak at Candahar. There is no real connection between Cabul and Candahar, and the retirement won't affect the situation of the latter place one iota; but it is not easy to get ignorant people to understand this. . . . .

Diary, SAFED SUNG, 16*th August*.—Took up my quarters in hut of General Bright. Comfortable, except that the flies are a pest, and quite prevent reading or writing in comfort. Large quantities of stores still here, but most of them will be eaten up, I hope. All troops ordered to move to-morrow, *i.e.* all belonging to Safed Sung post.

HALT, 17*th August*.—Daunt's Brigade marched in this morning; all well. The men lining the heights saw a few Afghans, and some *said* they saw a banner, but it is most unlikely. . . . .

HALT, 18*th August*. — . . . . March to-morrow to Fort Battye. The Brigades follow at intervals of one day. All will be concentrated at Jelalabad by the 25th. From thence the force breaks up.

FORT BATTYE, 19*th August*.—A short march; road stony and very deep in dust. Visited a fine old garden belonging to the Amir, which was laid out in the time of the Mogul Empire by Ali Murdan Khan.[1] There are some remarkably fine chenar trees in it, but it is greatly neglected. Very warm day.

ROSABAD, 20*th August*.—Went into the fort till the

[1] The celebrated architect of the Emperor Shah Jehan. He designed the Shalimar Gardens at Lahore.

camp was pitched. We are among the stones again. . . . . Hottest day we have had. Ther. 100°.

JELALABAD, *21st August.*—Under punkahs in a room: tolerably pleasant. Got a telegram from Viceroy telling me not to go beyond Lundi Kotal till I get his letter.

ALI BOGHAN, *23rd August.*—Left Jelalabad in the afternoon, after seeing Hills and arranging matters with him.

24th August.—Took tonga[1] at Ali Boghan this morning, and came on to Lundi Kotal. . . . . Went round the station in the afternoon with Colonel Limond (Engineers), and thoroughly inspected it.

LUNDI KOTAL, *25th August.*—No entry, except that I went all over the position with Limond.

27th August.—Visited old camp and surrounding country. The worst site possible for a cantonment or advanced post; every possible objection could be made to it.

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

LUNDI KOTAL, *27th August* 1880.

I must begin my letter betimes, as I have a good deal of work to do in the Khyber before I bid adieu to the army in Afghanistan.

I arrived here two days ago, and march to-morrow for Peshawur, where I hope to arrive on the 30th. On the 31st I start for Simla, whither I have been summoned by the Viceroy. I don't quite know what I am to do when I get there; but the Adjutant-General says the Chief has recommended that I be permitted to take up my command at Umballa.[2] If Sir Neville Chamberlain[3] does not wish to be relieved at once, and will remain till March or April next, I shall resign my command and go home for the winter. The withdrawal of the troops has hitherto been very successful, and without the smallest mishap. Of

[1] A two-wheeled post-cart.

[2] *I.e.* As a General of Division.

[3] Commander-in-Chief of Madras.

course this is good luck, and I do not take any credit for it; but I do take credit for getting the troops out of the country with dignity, though some of the newspapers abuse me like a pickpocket for returning when I did, though they would be unable to give a single good reason for remaining a day longer than was necessary. I believe this is the best service I have ever performed, and that I shall eventually get credit for it. Few people understand the merits of the case, but they don't hesitate to argue about it, and write nonsense on the subject.[1] . . . . Of course all eyes are turned towards Candahar, and it is just possible that I may have something to say about Bobs' success there before closing this letter. From the meagre account received of the sortie of the 16th, it would seem that misfortune has followed our standards again.[2] The death of General Brooke and several other officers, with only 180 casualties, does not look well for the conduct of the troops. I hope that the Afghan successes will induce the bulk of Ayub's army to wait for Bobs, as it will be a difficult matter to decide what is to be done next if he bolts back to Herat. Bobs has certainly gone on at a wonderful pace. If he is at Candahar by the 30th or 31st, his march will have been a splendid one. I don't think he will have any opposition till he gets near Candahar. . . . .

Diary, ALI MUSJID, *28th August*.—Pretty march to this place, which is now an exceedingly strong but extensive position, too much scattered, and could not all be held if seriously attacked.

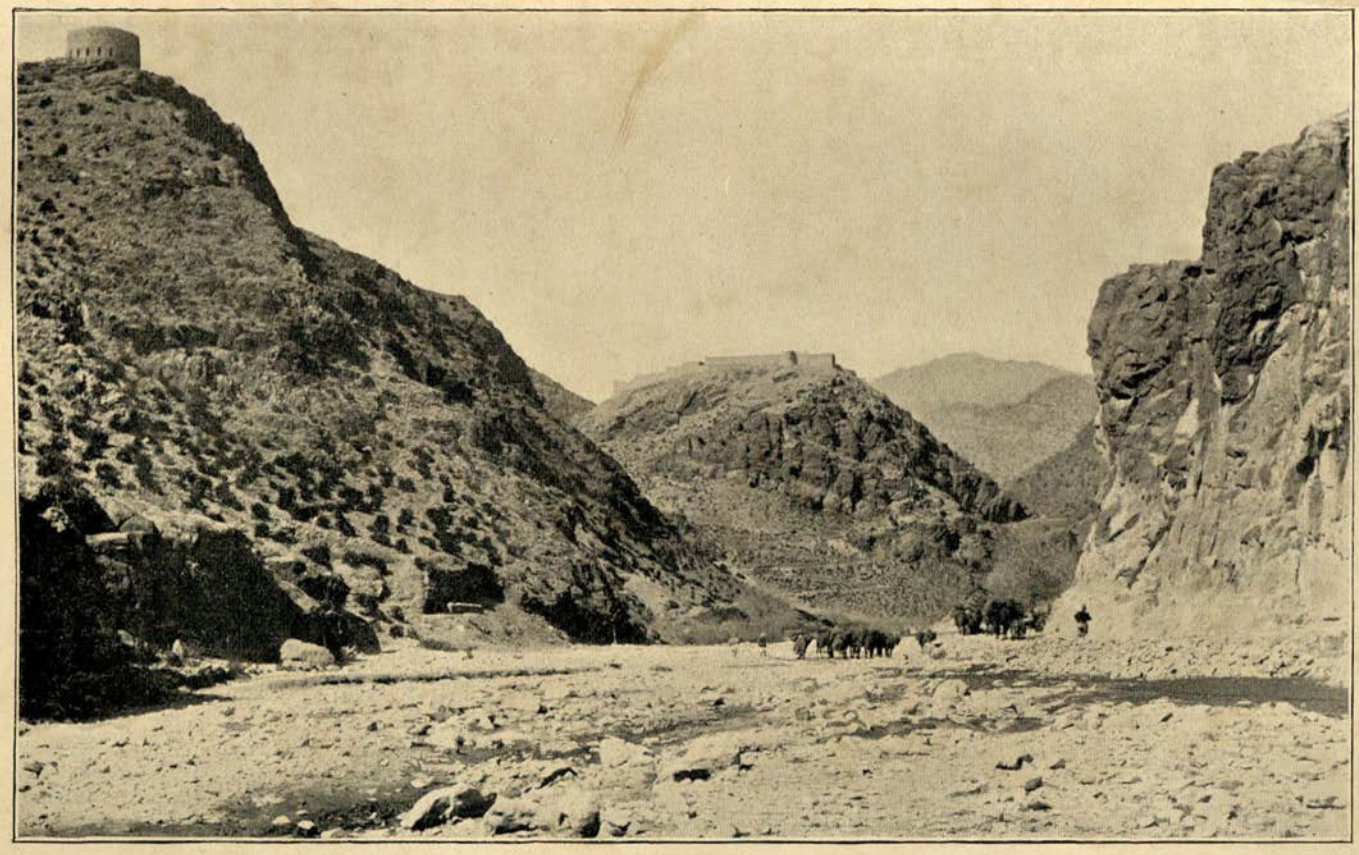
[1] A letter from a high officer at Simla, received by General Stewart about this time, approving of his action, says:—"I myself have no doubt that politically and strategically you were right to retire from Cabul after launching Roberts' division at Candahar. . . . . Your unopposed withdrawal shows you to have chosen well your time. The Afghans have certainly passed the word down the line not to tread on the snake's tail. The Indian natives say we have left Abdul Rahman to occupy the Afghans, as one leaves a lump of sugar to attract wasps while one bolts from a room full of them. I hope the wasps won't settle on him too heavily."

[2] This was the unsuccessful sortie referred to at p. 351, vol. 2, of Lord Roberts' "Forty-One Years in India."

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

ALI MUSJID, 28th *August.*

I find this letter must be posted in an hour or so. This has taken me by surprise, as I thought to-morrow was the mail day from the next place, Jamrud. This is a most picturesque spot, and is now a very strong place indeed. . . . . The feeling that I am returning to civilisation again is a queer one, and I shall not know myself riding about the country without an escort and firearms. The new Amir is doing very well as yet, and I think there is now every prospect of his holding his own for good. None of the other Sirdars are his equal in ability, and being a new man is greatly in his favour, because he is not committed to any particular set of men. I am not particularly interested in Abdul Rahman, but I should like our settlement to stand at any rate for a reasonable time. It is strange that so few people understand the object of our retirement now. Even the Government was not satisfied. Though they never said anything to me, I could see they did not like my plans. . . . . However, I felt I was doing right, and I would have done the same thing again at any seasonable hour. Of course I was abused by the Lahore paper and by some of the home papers; but their reasons for delaying the retirement are ludicrously wrong and misleading. The authorities in England do not quite understand the case: but they have left the matter in my hands, and so far everything has been most successful. Lord Ripon says that, if anything goes wrong, he and I will have to stand the blame. For this I have always been prepared. I believe the new Viceroy is most popular; because he makes himself pleasant to all without making favourites of any. This is just what he ought to do. He (Lord Ripon) has been most kind to me, and the other day, when I talked of leaving the Force about this time, he advised me not to do so, as it might lay me open to criticism both in this country and at home, by unfriendly persons who were looking out for an opportunity of pick-

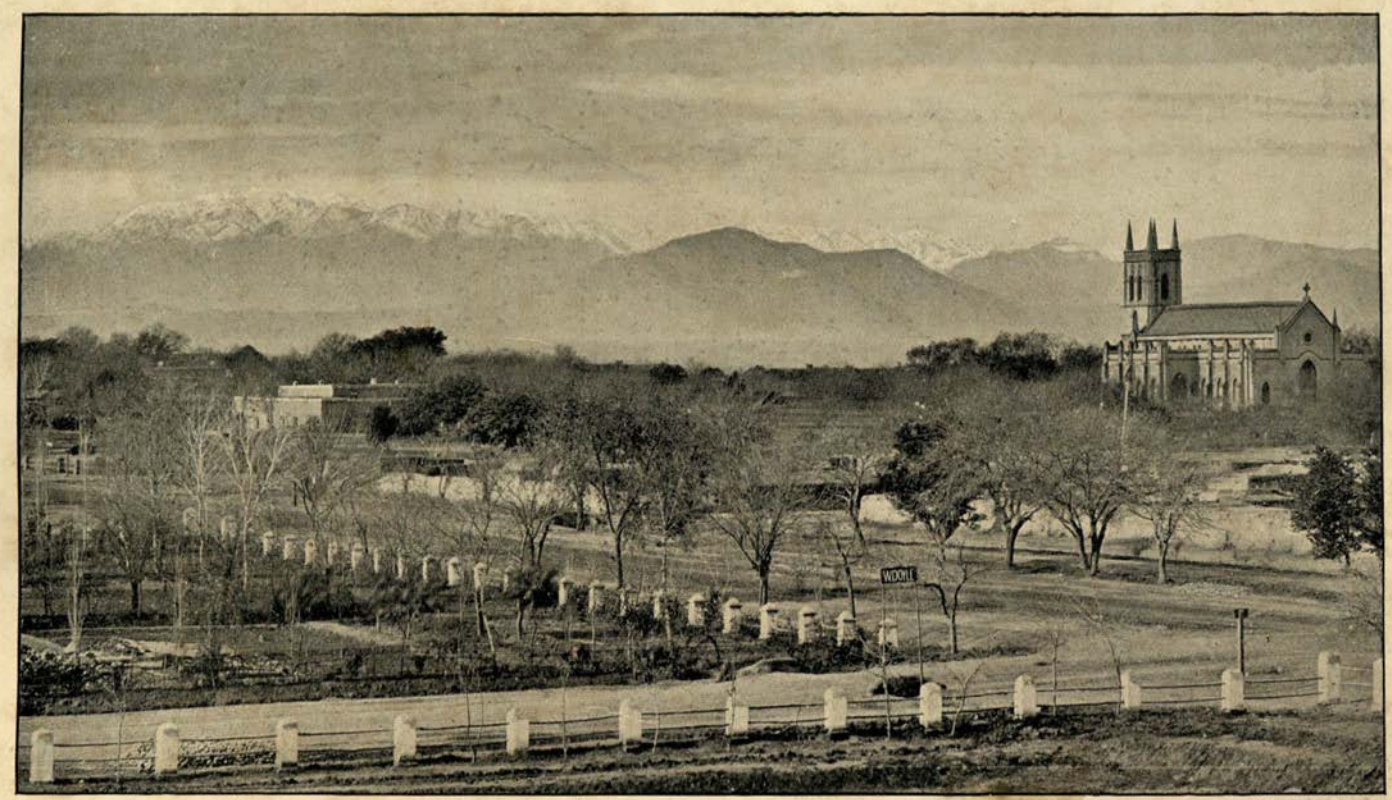


Ali Musjid in the Khyber Pass. (*From a Photograph by* Mr F. St John Gore.) [*To face page* 384.

ing holes in my proceedings. I know there are some people who are jealous of my reputation; but if I have never done anything very brilliant, I have not yet made a single mistake of importance, and I have run plenty of risks. People are making a great fuss about Roberts' force and its dangers, but his fighting powers are at least twice as great as that of my force when I went over the ground last spring, and he is marching at the end of harvest time when everything is on the ground, whereas I found nothing except what I hunted up in the fields and caves, etc. I hope that by this time to-morrow or next day Bobs will have polished off Ayub and returned to Candahar. . . . .

It is obvious that in thus justifying the risk which he had decided to run in sending a detached force to Candahar, General Stewart had no intention of comparing the merits—as military achievements—of his own march from Candahar to Cabul, four months earlier, with those of General Roberts' march by the reverse route, which was still in progress. Such a comparison, however, has often been made by military experts and other critics, and a few words on the subject are perhaps called for, ere the story of Stewart's career in Afghanistan is closed. It would seem, however, to be sufficient to say, that each of the two exploits was splendidly carried out. The first was the complement of the second. The upward march was no doubt full of difficulty. It lay along a route untraversed by British forces since 1842. It was hampered by the great labour of dragging a multitude of heavy guns—including a siege train—over rough and precipitous tracks. Camels were the principal beasts of burden, and the obtaining of supplies for men and cattle was a matter of constant anxiety, many villages having been

deserted and burned, and all grain removed, destroyed, or hidden. During the earlier stages of the advance of Stewart's army, a hostile force hovered on its flank, and its progress was opposed by a large gathering of fanatics. The downward march was less difficult. The troops were the best that could be selected from the whole of the very large force assembled in Northern Afghanistan. The experience gained on the upward march led to the abandonment of all wheeled artillery—and to the employment of only mules, ponies and donkeys—as baggage animals. Moreover, the road over which the second force travelled, including the difficult Zambarak Pass, had been made by the Sappers of the first. All this should certainly be borne in mind, and, in estimating the value of General Stewart's achievement, the following argument which appeared in a public newspaper some five years later may well be weighed. "It is a curious fact that, while General Roberts was made world-famous by his march from Cabul to Candahar, it is only students of the war who are aware that Sir Donald Stewart's march in the opposite direction, from Candahar to Cabul, was really a more difficult task. It was first in time, and General Roberts had, therefore, the advantage of all the information that Sir Donald could give as to the state of the country and the nature of the road. It was conducted when the tribes were actually hostile, and whereas General Roberts encountered no enemy, General Stewart had to fight his way, and was at least once in the most imminent danger of destruction. But at that time the British public were hardly aware that such a



St John's Church, Peshawur. [*To face p.* 387.

march was taking place.[1] When General Roberts set out for Candahar, events of the deepest interest had concentrated the eyes of the world on his exploits."

Diary (JAMRUD, *at the mouth of the Khyber Pass*) *29th August.*—Got out of Afghanistan to-day with some pleasure. The last two years have been eventful ones in my life, and I am thankful that I have passed through them without any discredit in any particular. Broke thermometer.[2]

PESHAWUR, *30th August.*—Marched from Jumrood this morning, and put up with Brigadier-General Hankin. Very pleasant getting into a house again. I move on to Umballa to-morrow afternoon. . . . .

PESHAWUR, *31st August.*—Had a long conversation with Waterfield[3] about frontier affairs, and I find that while agreeing with me on the general principle of withdrawing our troops from the frontier, he desires to make the tribes quite independent of India as well as of Cabul. A great mistake, in my opinion. Leave for Rawal Pindi at 5 P.M.

4th Sept.—left Umballa after dinner last night and arrived at Simla about a quarter past two to-day. Lord Ripon has asked me to call on him at 3.30 P.M. to-morrow—I fancy to sound me about Council.

5th Sept.—Called on Lord Ripon, who very kindly offered me Council in succession to Johnson,[4] who has resigned. . . . .

On the 9th September the Viceroy, Lord Ripon, wrote to Sir Donald Stewart as follows, but no

[1] They were absorbed in the excitement of a General Election.

[2] Whether this was done by accident or intentionally as a token of rejoicing on leaving Afghanistan, with its trying changes of temperature, does not appear.

[3] Colonel W. G. Waterfield, C.S.I., Commissioner of Peshawur.

[4] General Sir Edwin Johnson, K.C.B., at that time Military Member of Council.

mention of the fact or of the honour announced is found in the diary :—

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, SIMLA, *9th Sept.* 1880.

MY DEAR SIR DONALD,—I have great pleasure in informing you that the Queen has been graciously pleased to create you a Grand Cross of the Bath, in recognition of your great services both military and political in Afghanistan.—Pray accept my hearty congratulations, and, believe me, yours sincerely, RIPON.

Meanwhile General Roberts had accomplished his celebrated march of 318 miles in 23 days to Candahar, where, on the 1st September, he attacked and totally dispersed the forces of Ayub Khan, capturing all his guns. Ayub Khan himself fled towards Herat.

Sir Donald Stewart to the Rev. T. J. L. Warneford.

SIMLA, *10th Sept.* 1880.

I have been appointed to Council. . . . . This has come on me very unexpectedly. . . . . The perfect success of Roberts' operations brings the war to a close in a way that must be satisfactory to the Government and a carping Press. The absurd arguments advanced about the withdrawal from Cabul make me disposed at times to open out on the writers, but I am advised that silence is the best answer, as the topic is probably worked out for the purpose of filling the paper, for the articles can serve no purpose *now*.

The concluding part of Mr Warneford's note may be appropriately given here.

Note by the Rev. T. J. L. Warneford.

"In July news was received of the Maiwand disaster, and orders were received from Government for a force of

10,000 men to be sent to the relief of Candahar. General Stewart might have taken command of the force himself, but he considered that he would be doing a service to General Roberts to give him the command, which he accordingly did. General Stewart came to my tent that day, and told me what he had done, asking me if I would like to accompany Roberts' force back to Candahar as Chaplain, or remain with him. I, of course, said I would remain. He said, 'Well, we have just come up from Candahar and cleared the road, so we are just as likely to see more fighting on our way back to India by the Khyber.' At that time the political officers believed the tribes were gathering between Cabul and Khyber, but the country turned out to be quiet, and we met with no opposition. . . . .

"Stewart himself was the last man to write himself up, or to care for praise. His one idea was that a man should do his duty, and that though he might deserve censure when he did not do it, yet he should not be patted on the back (so to say) because he did it. He was blamed, I know, by many for not having made more mention of his march, and of his battles, and, as was urged by some, his lieutenants suffered in consequence. Be this as it may, I feel sure it was not because he did not fully appreciate the good service his officers rendered, but he shrank from that laudation that was so often lavishly bestowed on men who, after all was said, only did their duty. Strict but just, kind and genial, Sir Donald went through his life, from the time I knew him first, with but one object in view, namely, to do his duty to God, his Queen, and country, and to desire no praise or honour from any. A kind, staunch friend, an honourable, upright man, he remained to the last."

Diary, 10th September.—Called on Viceroy about withdrawal from Candahar in answer to telegram from Secretary of State. Deprecated the move on various grounds, though not desirous of binding ourselves to remain there. . . . . Heard of Bobs being appointed Commander-in-Chief of Madras; very pleased, and wired to him congratulations.

13th September.—I am to be read into Council this afternoon at 4 P.M. It is rather nervous work for me, as it will probably be the turning-point in my career. I shall try and do my best for the State, but I fear my best days are gone.

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

SIMLA, *13th September* 1880.

. . . . I received yours of the 18th August yesterday, enclosing the cutting from the *Spectator* on Roberts' march to Candahar. I knew that the detachment of Bobs' column would be criticised; but all the same, it was forced on me as the only policy to be followed, because I saw that Phayre could not relieve Candahar; and, if he had got there, I don't think he would have made such a good job of it as Bobs did. As regards the retirement from Cabul, people forget that Candahar and Cabul are separate States just now, and the people of one province care nothing for what is going on in the other. Again, we had settled everything in Cabul, and we were bound to leave if the Amir wished it; but, above all, after Bobs got out of sight, we were of no use to him, and, if he had to retire at all—which was a contingency we never thought of for one moment—he could have gone over the Shutargardan. I was perfectly certain, too, that he could lick anything he came across, and that being so, I never for one moment hesitated to send him adrift on his own resources. That everything has turned out as I foresaw may be attributed to luck, if you like; but it was precisely what I calculated upon, and I am surely entitled to the credit of its success. When submitting my proposals, I pointed out that they were necessary and perfectly easy of execution. Of course a failure, either in Bobs' march or my retirement, would have damned me for ever; but I felt confidence both in the wisdom of the movements and in my ability to carry them out without fail, and this, too, in opposition to the whole Government. They all say that I disobeyed every order, and ought to have been removed from my command.

The only one who supported me was Lord Ripon, and even he said that I was disobeying my orders; but, as I was doing exactly what he wanted, he would not check me. The Viceroy is such a nice man in every way—no tricks or shiftiness about him. He has been very kind to me, and has asked me to accompany him on his shooting tour. The rest will, I think, do me good, for I want it sadly. . . . . I must say I do not feel quite the thing myself; but this may be due to the change of climate—going from an exceedingly dry to an exceedingly damp climate must be trying to any one, and to me, with a slightly weak heart, it is especially so. So long as I do not take violent exercise, I think I shall pull through. . . . . The Press has not said much about my appointment yet, but they can't find much fault with me; as I have not during the war made a single failure, either, military or political. There may be differences of opinion about the retirement from Cabul; but I feel quite certain that no one who quite understands the merits of the case could blame me even for that. I don't care to work the Press, and I shall not do so; and people may say what they like. Still, I may do myself harm. . . . . It is a course[1] that is abhorrent to me, and I shall take my chance, by letting worth speak for itself. I find I have plenty of good friends in power, who have never even seen me, and, on the whole, it is more satisfactory to find that one's deeds are the friends on whom one can rely. They don't flatter anyhow, and people can judge for themselves what they are worth I suspect Lord Northbrook has stood my friend more than once. There seems to be a regular scramble for the Commander-in-Chiefship. I am very indifferent about that, or anything else in the way of glory; but I believe I am in the running. I have no expectation of being selected; but, if the office is offered to me I could accept it with a clear conscience, for I have not sought the appointment. I send you a *menu* of my first dinner at Government House. The cook, you see, paid me a little compliment in the puddings. "Pouding à la Ahmud

[1] *I.e.* "working the Press."

Khel" tasted very much like cornflour and raisins; but I am no judge of these things. It created much amusement at the party, and everybody swore that it was delicious! . . . .

Sir Donald Stewart having now taken his seat as Military Member of the Viceroy's Council, his active service as a soldier in the field came to an end. At this point of his life's story, it seems eminently fitting to quote the following vivid description of the man and the Commander written by one of his most intimate and closely-associated companions in arms—General Sir James Hills-Johnes.

23rd October 1901.

"I do not quite know what you require of me regarding my old and dear friend, Sir Donald Stewart. . . . I gather you want an expression of my opinion of him. . . . I have had, no doubt, great opportunities of judging of his character, and had the privilege of seeing much of him both as a Commanding Officer and as a personal friend. . . . . I first met Sir Donald at the Delhi Camp, 1857, only seeing him occasionally doing his staff work. I saw him again once or twice at the final capture of Lucknow—then again at Bareilly—and frequently at Simla up to the Abyssinian Campaign, when I served under him. Up to that date I had always looked on him as a very able and brave officer —very cool under fire, and very clear-headed at work. It was, however, when I saw the way he organised the Bengal Contingent for the Abyssinian War—ably assisted by Major Roberts (the equipment of his Brigade was quite perfect—so much so that had he received orders he could have marched his Brigade up country without a day's delay after disembarkation)—that I found him to be quite far and away superior to the general run of officers—with a better head—with great organising powers and quick judgment—and withal with a placid temperament. Both

in Calcutta and when in camp at Zoolla I found him all that I have above stated—together with a very strong will, which he exercised in a way which always impressed me as not to be demurred to—and yet he was quite ready to alter a command if the objection made was shown to be a sound one—I refer to the commands issued through his staff officers, whom he always treated as confidential assistants. I saw a good deal of him from the Abyssinian War up till I left India, serving him as Assistant Adjutant-General at Meean Meer and in the first phase of the Afghan War. We also lived together at Meean Meer for some time, so I became a very intimate and very devoted friend and admirer of his. I have never met a clearer-headed nor a sounder man than Sir Donald, nor a kinder or more genial friend. He was held in the greatest respect by all officers and men who served under him—also by all natives of high and low degree, whom he impressed greatly by those straight eyes that looked them through and through under his heavy bushy eyebrows. The Afghan chiefs had a very high opinion of him. He was wonderfully quick and decided in all his doings and orders, accepting full responsibility for all he ordered—putting aside the red tapeism of Government offices when in the field, and necessity required special and speedy action and expenditure—and woe betide any one who hesitated to accept his dictum or in any way interfered with his domain of work. I know two instances where the Head Quarter officials presumed to express disapproval of his work—they caught a Tartar—and a third instance when the officer being directly under his control in the Field appealed to the Head of his Department at Head Quarters for permission to carry out the orders given—the same involving expenditure not laid down in the Army Regulations. With all this decision and insistence on the prompt execution of his orders, he was particularly kind and thoughtful of the difficulties that often stood in the way of their execution—always ready to make allowances when he saw that efforts had been made to carry out the same. In fact, he was quite in the first list of our Commanders—I

know no one, not even Lord Roberts, under whom I should sooner have served, in peace or war—so cool and brave, and with a great grasp of whatever situation he was placed in. His social qualifications were of a very superior order—a very good shot and good at all games—taking an active part in them quite up to the end. He was good enough to come and spend a week with us for my shoot, and shot uncommonly well the last time he was with us—the last winter of his life—it was not the *amount* of sport he got here, but out of kindly feelings towards us that he made a point of coming.

. . . . . .

"Sir Donald very kindly backed up Roberts' recommendation of me for the command of his Division in the Field, when he vacated it to take over the supreme command in Afghanistan, and I was fortunate to get it. To show how fair he was in all his acts—when the Maiwand disaster befel us and Roberts got orders to lead a column to Candahar, a Brigade of my Division was ordered to be made over to Roberts. Being anxious to accompany the column, feeling quite certain that whatever fighting took place would be with the column—I rode into Cabul to see Sir Donald, and to beg of him to send my Division *in toto*—and me of course in its command—in place of General Ross; but he at once pointed out that Ross was my senior, and further, that as Roberts was a gunner and Ross an infantry officer, he had a double claim to go, and had been offered the option of going—an option which he naturally availed himself of. He then asked me if I now felt aggrieved, adding, 'How do you know you will not have enough to do here before we retire?' I of course saw the justice of his decision, and went back as happy as a disappointed man could feel. I knew that the decision was the proper one, and accepted it as best I could, feeling all the time that there was little chance of opposition at our end of Afghanistan, where one and all were sick of us, and would be only too glad to let us depart in peace—and this was the case—our retirement was effected without a shot being fired at us. . . .

I can tell you one story, where he and I differed at Candahar, and in which he followed, some months later on, the advice I then gave him. . . . . During the time I was Sir Donald's A.A.G. at Candahar thefts of rifles, etc., were constantly occurring—tents entered into, even with sentries close at hand, and rifles taken. I advised Sir Donald to send for the mullicks[1] of the various villages within a radius of four or five miles, and to warn them that if the thefts did not cease he would fine each village very heavily—I suggested Rs.500 each village. Sir Donald said this was a monstrous idea—'for I should be punishing the innocent for the guilty.' I replied, 'Not so, for these villages were no doubt participators in the booty, giving harbour in the daytime to the professionals who stole in the neighbourhood.' Sir Donald would not listen to me. Well, the thefts continued, and at last the robbers got so emboldened that they actually got into the Head Quarter garden and stole the durbar carpets—a most wonderful and clever theft. I was at Cabul at the time and so only know the result by hearsay—but Sir Donald was furious, sent for the mullicks, gave them a fortnight to produce the carpets or else each village would have to pay a fine of Rs.1000. The effect was magical: not only were the carpets returned, but almost all the rifles restored, also many things the loss of which had not been reported—thus proving that what may be looked on as an injustice in civilised countries is the only possible way of dealing with crime in such a country as Afghanistan. . . . ."

[1] The headmen.

CHAPTER XXIV.

MILITARY MEMBER OF COUNCIL

As Military Member of the Viceroy's Council, Sir Donald Stewart became the War Minister of India, with authority to give orders on behalf of the Government in all matters belonging to his department. In important cases, however, he was bound to refer to the Viceroy before arriving at a final decision, and in all really great questions, the papers would either go "round Council," or be discussed at a Cabinet meeting before orders were issued. For a month or two after entering on his new office General Stewart remained with the Viceroy at Simla.

From Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

SIMLA, 18*th Oct.* 1880.

. . . . . I see you, like everybody else, are beginning to think of honours and rewards. I do not trouble my head about these things, and I do not set a very high value on them. I daresay Bobs will get something good, a grant of money or a pension. On the whole, I think I ought not to be far behind him, if the value of one's work goes for anything; but then the trumpeting of the Press has a good deal to say to these matters, and my services are not so well known. . . . . I have just been to see Bobs at Government House. He is looking very well indeed, and is in

great spirits at getting away from work. He showed me a letter he had from the Queen, a very nice letter indeed, and one to be proud of. . . . .[1]

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

SIMLA, 25*th Oct.* 1880.

. . . . . There has been a great deal of talk about the retirement from Cabul by people who don't understand the situation, but I am not ashamed of the part I took in the matter. It was entirely my own doing, and now most thinking people see that events have completely justified my action. The Secretary of State has recently sent a despatch, in which all this is fully recognised by Her Majesty's Government at home. Of course there were great risks, but then, what big business is ever undertaken which is not open to risks? If there were no risks then there would not be much credit; but I always felt that my plans would succeed, and could not well fail, and if they did I was quite prepared for the alternative, and could have remained in the country as long as I liked. . . . .

At the end of October Sir Donald Stewart accompanied Lord Ripon on a visit to the native state of Nahun, in the lower hills, some 50 miles above Umballa. A few weeks later he arrived at Calcutta, the winter Head Quarters of the Government of India.

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

CAMP, NAHUN, 30*th Oct.* 1880.

We are marching through the hills and enjoying ourselves much, but as yet I have had no shooting. We are promised tigers and all sorts of game to-morrow or next day, but perhaps we shall not see a great deal. The

[1] General Roberts had returned to India after his victory at Candahar, and was about to take leave to England before assuming the Command of the Madras Army.

march is something, however, and it is a great thing to get away from office-boxes. . . . .

The trip through the hills is most delightful. The Governor-General's party are all nice fellows, and everything goes on most pleasantly. I generally ride with His Excellency, who is a most pleasant companion. We have had no shooting as yet, but the Raja says we are to do wonders in a few days. The roads are capital, and it is like riding through a gentleman's park all day long. The sun has touched up all our noses, and we shall not look very pretty at the Durbar, but that don't matter much. We shall all be very much alike except Father Kerr,[1] who has just recovered from a severe attack of typhoid fever, and always goes about with an umbrella. He is a particularly nice fellow, was once a sailor.

NAHUN, *1st Nov.*

We arrived here yesterday and are now enjoying a halt. The Raja has made us most comfortable, going so far as to supply us with oysters and pomfret from Bombay. Everything is being done in grand style under the direction of Major Nisbet.[2]

We drive the rest of the way to Deyrah, getting a couple of days' shooting on the way. The relief from office-boxes is delightful, and if the Raja's band would go home and take a little rest, I should be quite happy. As it happens, it has been playing "God save the Queen" and some polkas ever since breakfast time, and it is now noon. . . . .

General Stewart's Service as War Minister was not destined to be of long duration. He had not been in office three months when his chance of succeeding Sir Frederick Haines as Commander-in-Chief began to excite public interest. Before the end of the year the appointment had been made.

[1] Chaplain to the Viceroy.

[2] Deputy-Commissioner of Simla and Superintendent of Hill States; now Colonel Nisbet, C.I.E.

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

CALCUTTA, *23rd Nov.* 1880.

. . . . . The papers in this country have it that I am to be next Commander-in-Chief. There is absolutely no foundation for the report, but people believe it, all the same. . . . .

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

CALCUTTA, *22nd Dec.* 1880.

. . . . . Meantime I have been taken a little aback by a telegram of Reuter, saying that my appointment of Commander-in-Chief has been announced in the *Times*. This looks like business, but yet I don't credit the report, as I have heard nothing about it myself, and I can hardly fancy they would notify it publicly without some reference to me. On the whole, it is awkward not knowing what the truth of the matter really is. . . . .

I shall of course offer the appointment of Military Secretary to Chapman. . . . .

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

CALCUTTA, *19th Jan.* 1881.

The letters you sent me . . . about the *Times* article convey the impression every one out here has taken of the matter. . . . .

So far as I can learn, the appointment is received with a good deal of cordiality on all sides. It is very well known that I have not taken any steps myself to get the appointment, and that I have stood on my own merits, whatever they may be. . . . .

I do not care much about popular opinion, but it is gratifying to see that my appointment is almost universally approved. . . . .

About this time Sir Donald received a letter,

apparently of a congratulatory nature, from his old friend, the Rev. William Forsyth of Abernethy. He sent a warm reply, which, fortunately, has been preserved.

Sir Donald Stewart to the Rev. W. Forsyth.

CALCUTTA, 19*th March* 1881.

You must accept my apologies for not answering your kind letter of the 25th December last sooner.

My excuse is press of official work and duties, which occupy my time incessantly. You are probably aware that I am a member of the Governor-General's Council—having charge of the War Department, I have more on my hands than I can get through in the day's work. . . . .

I fear I lose many friends because I am a bad correspondent. I suppose I write so much officially or of necessity, that my *voluntary* scribbling is of the scantiest. Of course I recollect you well, indeed I remember you a small boy at the Dell of Abernethy, when I was on a visit to my grandfather, as far back as 1836 or 7.

I passed through your parish once or twice within the last twelve or thirteen years, but did not stop, as I was always in a hurry. It is a long time to look forward to, but I appear to be booked for another spell of five years in this country.

The appointment of Commander-in-Chief—the blue ribbon of the profession—is a sore temptation to me, as I wanted to go home for good. But out of consideration for my family I must remain and do my best. It is a great position for the friendless boy who left Strathspey over forty years ago to make his own way in the world. I think I remember every hole and corner of the Manse, if you are living in the old house. I know the garden too, and how to get into it *over the wall;* also where the best apple and plum trees used to be! . . . .

In a few days I shall have to take up the office of Commander-in-Chief; but, in one respect, it will be a relief to me, as the work is easy compared with that of my present office.

Many thanks for the note you sent me written by my grandfather to your father very nearly 59 years ago.

It is a very interesting memorial of the old man, and I doubt if the family has another scrap of his writing. How have you preserved such a trifle all these years?—Believe me, my dear Forsyth, yours very sincerely,

D. M. STEWART.

P.S.—They have just made me a Baronet, and are, I believe, to give me a pension of £1000 a year for my field-services. I think they have very much overrated the value of my humble work.

From the Financial Secretary, India Office, to Sir Donald Stewart.

8th April 1881.

I am directed to inform you that, Her Majesty having been pleased to confer upon you the honour of a Baronetcy in recognition of the distinguished services which you have rendered during the Afghan War, the Secretary of State for India in Council has much pleasure in granting to you, at your option, either an annuity of £1000 from Indian revenues during your life, or a capital sum of £12,500.

Should you elect the annuity it will necessarily be in abeyance according to the requirements of the law, during the time that you hold the Office of Commander-in-Chief in India or Member of Council.

The capital sum was accepted.

CHAPTER XXV

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF IN INDIA

GENERAL STEWART assumed charge of his new office on the 7th April 1881.

Lady Stewart, accompanied by her second daughter,[1] joined her husband at Calcutta in the month of March, and remained with him —with the exception of one short visit to England — till the end of his Indian Service. This fact explains the cessation of the delightful series of letters to which the interest of the preceding chapters is so greatly due.

Sir Donald Stewart's period of office as Commander-in-Chief was marked by no great campaign, but it was none the less of the highest importance from a military point of view. During it the Government of India adopted, at his suggestion, a serious plan for bringing our North-West frontier into a sound condition of defence by the construction of military roads and railways, of fortresses and entrenched camps at the requisite points, and of the necessary additions to the force, in order to utilise these material precautions.

It is unnecessary to follow the daily routine of Sir Donald Stewart's work as Commander-in-Chief, his tours of inspection, or his oscilla-

[1] Now Mrs Eustace.

tions with the Government of India between Calcutta and Simla, their winter and summer Head Quarters. It is more profitable, for the purpose of describing the man and indicating his opinions on public questions, to give a few extracts from his private note-books, which, fortunately, contain memoranda of the more important minutes and letters written by him from time to time.

Extracts from Note-book.

April 1881.

. . . . . The feeling in this country about the sudden termination of hostilities in South Africa is one of irritation. It is held that the honour of Her Majesty's arms has been tarnished and unnecessarily sacrificed to the personal views of the Radicals. This is bad enough, and if it only affected the European community, it would not matter much. But the native Press is beginning to hint that British troops are not so invincible as they were, and to draw conclusions from the Boer settlement that are anything but flattering to the British Power at the present day. Though the educated classes out here know perfectly well the motives that have induced the Liberal Government to reverse the action of their opponents in regard to the occupation of Candahar,[1] they profess to believe that the withdrawal is in some way due to fear of Russia. Though this belief is, for the most part, affected for the purpose of bringing discredit on the Government, it does a certain amount of harm among the ignorant. If the Government will consent to hold Peshin and complete the railway to Quetta, we need not regret leaving Candahar. But if they throw away the advantages of these moderate measures, they will commit a blunder which it will be difficult hereafter to correct. The Amir

Majuba and Candahar.

[1] The withdrawal from Candahar had been determined upon by this time.

is doing wonders in a small way, and, if he can prevent a rising of Ayub's friends at Cabul, it is the opinion of the best informed Afghans, that there will be no organised opposition to his rule at Candahar, and that Ayub, without the direct assistance of his adherents in the direction of Cabul, will be unable to molest the Amir from the side of Herat. . . . .

April 1881.

. . . . . My idea is that all our establishments in India should be on a war footing except in transport. We are practically never at peace in this country, and we cannot be too particular in having every unit fit for immediate service the instant it is supplied with transport. On this point I do not think there can be two opinions, that is, if any regard is to be paid to efficiency and true economy. . . . .

Establishments to be on a war footing.

The army is the *real* police of India, and if our soldiers are not seen, the people do not believe in their existence. . . . .

Real Police of India.

In this country it is much easier to keep the people quiet by a constant show of force than to trust to our ability to suppress an outbreak when it takes place. It is to be recollected that in India the friends of order are nowhere. If a disturbance takes place, not a soul raises his hand till the Government officials arrive, and thus the disturbers of the peace have it all their own way for a time. . . . .

Use of a show of force.

May 1881.

Corporal punishment was, in point of fact, a substitute for death, and I don't believe that order and discipline can be maintained in an army exposed to the temptations of war, if the Commander has no other effective means of enforcing his authority in serious cases, than by resorting to the penalty of death. At the commencement of the Afghan War I had to try three soldiers for insubordination in refusing to perform certain fatigue duties at a time when the whole force was exposed to great privations from cold and hard work. The three men were promptly flogged,

Abolition of corporal punishment.

and the example was so efficacious that I had not to punish another soldier in the same way during the remainder of the war. How such cases are to be dealt with under the present law I cannot imagine, but I fancy that most Commanders would rather flog an insubordinate soldier illegally than shoot him in accordance with the law.

. . . . . It was very painful to me to have to punish soldiers in this way, but I was more than justified by the result. Insubordination is the one offence that is likely to be dangerous to discipline, and I do not think it is possible to devise a punishment that will act as an adequate deterrent.

June 1881.

. . . . . I believe our withdrawal from Candahar is much regretted by the majority of the inhabitants of the city and the district round, partly, no doubt, because they miss our money, but chiefly because they had come to prize the peace and order which accompanied our occupation. The priests and their fanatical followers are really the only people who rejoice in our departure. . . . .

Withdrawal from Candahar.

July 1881.

. . . . . It would never do to attempt the principle of selection in the Indian Service. All that is required is the power of getting rid of officers who become manifestly inefficient at any period of their service, and this power we now have. . . . .

Selection in Indian Army.

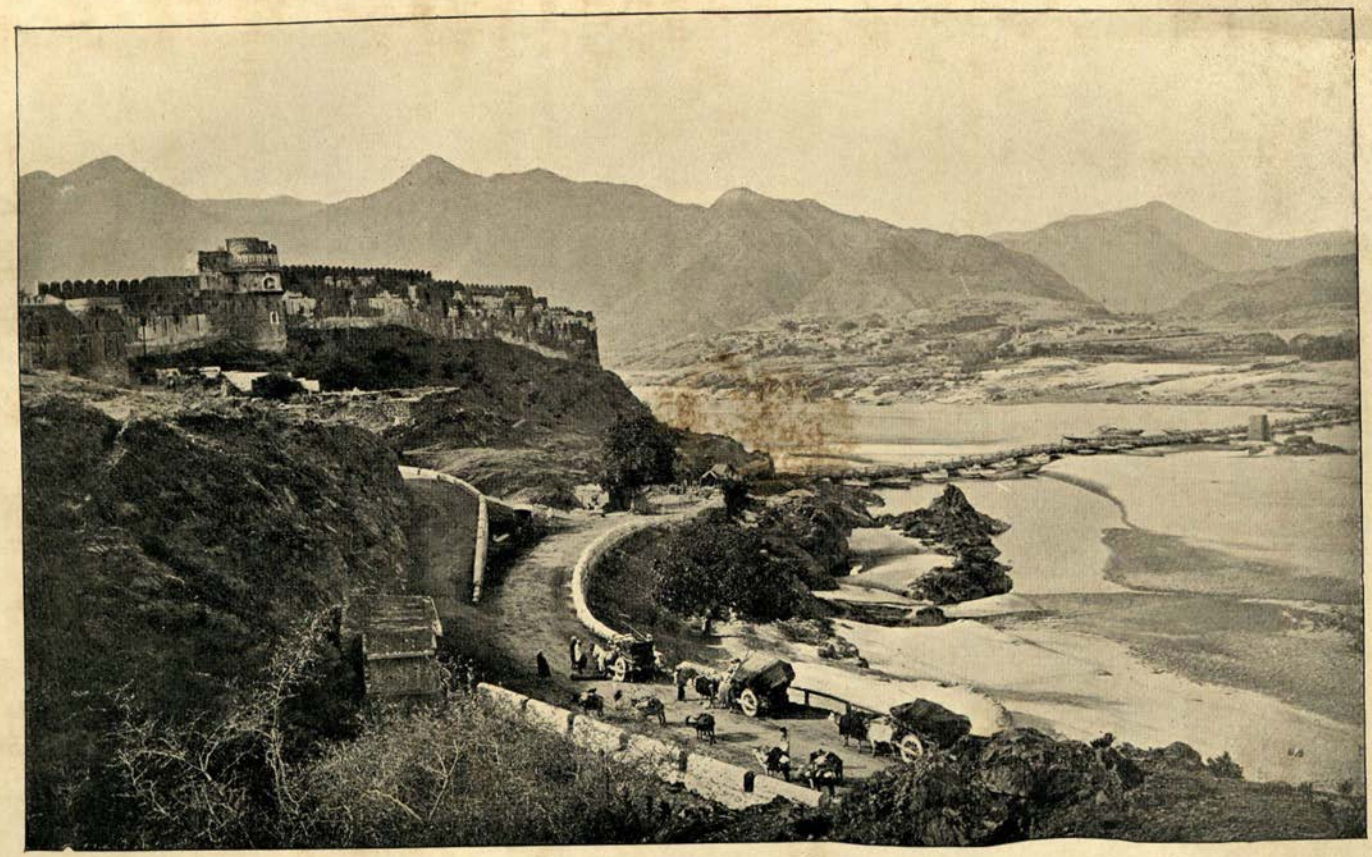
Do what you will, the principle of selection cannot work, because it requires perfect wisdom on the part of commanding and general officers, and my experience of such is that most of us are very ordinary human beings, whose judgment is not always unerring. Besides this, where is the standard of excellence that is to guide us? I would reject incompetent men unhesitatingly, but there our function of selection ought to end; for our very best officers are often the men who have nothing brilliant about them, and whose good qualities are hid till the day of trial arrives.

September 1881.

. . . . . The Amir's victory is a good thing for us, as it shows that our aid to the man who has always been considered the chief of the weakest party in Afghanistan has not been thrown away. I am willing to admit that I am one of those who thought Ayub's party would prevail in the end. I have always considered the Amir to be by far the astutest politician and statesman in Afghanistan, but I did not credit him with energy and high military qualities. So far, however, the Afghan policy of the present Government has been a success, and every one must rejoice that it is so, whether they approve or disapprove of it.

Victory by Abdul Rahman over Ayub Khan.

The following note, and other notes which will be quoted, refer to the important question of the defence of the Frontier. In the opinion of many, Sir Donald Stewart has not received the full recognition due to him for his unwearied and constant attention to this subject. If credit has been withheld the injustice was great. The note-books from which these extracts are taken show that his mind was penetrated by a sense of the imperative necessity of strengthening our position by the improvement of our communications and by an adequate increase to our army. General Chapman, who was Military Secretary to Sir Donald Stewart for the greater part of his tenure of the office of Commander-in-Chief, writes: "His great feat during the period of his command was that he persuaded the Government to increase the European Establishment of the army in India by 10,000 men. He was persuaded that nothing should be done towards the increase of the Native army without maintaining at all times the proportion



Attock, with Bridge of Boats over the Indus, 1878. [*To face p.* 406.

of Europeans that had been approved of after the mutiny."

We know that General Stewart's own experience in Afghanistan had convinced him of the necessity of such measures of precaution and of the wisdom and economy of taking them before the danger was close at hand. He knew what it meant to move an army in that rugged, waterless country, through those dreadful defiles and gorges, amidst that fierce and perfidious population; and he had in the course of his advance upon Candahar, his march to Cabul, and the subsequent withdrawal of his force through the Khyber Pass, the fullest opportunity for local observation.

October 1881.

. . . . . If the Government would only consent to the completion of the Railway to Quetta I should be well satisfied with our position there. It would, however, be useless to propose anything of the sort just now, as the fanatical section of the Liberal party would at once characterise the strengthening of our position in that quarter as an insidious evasion of our avowed policy. For my own part, I have never been a Russo-phobist. But I do not think it would be wise to ignore Russia's proceedings in the Tekke Turcoman Country, nor do I think we can look with indifference on the *rectification* of frontier which she seems determined to effect with Persia on the line of the Attreck. Any acquisition of territory to the South of the Kopet Dagh range means the acquisition of an easy military road into Khorassan. I have been very much struck with the change of tone in M. de Giers' later communication on the subject of the limits of the new Trans-Caspian province. At one time we were led to believe that Russia did not intend to extend her authority beyond Askabad, but by the latest accounts from St Petersburg I observe that M. de Giers talks about Sarakhs and the intervening country as if it had no owner, and was therefore a Russian

Advance of Russia.

possession. It is impossible that our Government can regard the threatened advance of Russia in the direction of Sarakhs with unconcern, for it would be a direct menace to Herat. I wish Her Majesty's Government would once and for all tell Russia how far she can go without treading on our toes. It will be too late to remonstrate when she has moved her flag to the confines of Afghanistan. . . . .

Nov. 1881.

. . . . . The Amir writes to me occasionally, and always in the same strain. He wants the means to drive "our" enemy from Afghanistan. Ayub's flight into Persia leaves Abdul Rahman entire master of the situation, and we shall soon see what he is really made of. His proceedings at Candahar have been in some respects prudent and sensible, but his display of spite against every one and everything belonging to the late Wali[1] (ruler) of that place does not show much consideration for the feelings of the British Government. The Wali was his personal enemy, but as our friend and servant, the houses and property might have been spared out of consideration for us . . . . .

Amir Abdul Rahman.

Jan. 1882.

. . . . . Though we are in a state of profound peace at present, it is impossible to say how long this state of things will last. There may be an explosion any day in Upper Burmah, and the French are intriguing in Siam, where our influence had hitherto been supreme. I do not suppose that either the Burmese or the French have the smallest intention of coming into collision with us, but they can make themselves exceedingly disagreeable and troublesome by interfering with our trade and in other ways.

Uncertainty of duration of peace.

. . . . . The army, like all other human institutions,

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[1] *I.e.* Sirdar Sher Ali Khan, who is so frequently mentioned in the letters from Candahar. After Ayub Khan's retreat, and the assumption of the Amirship by Abdul Rahman, Sher Ali had retired, in December 1880, to Kurachee as a gues of the Government of India.

requires periodical repairs, and these repairs require to be executed by experts, but this does not seem to be the view of the House of Commons, which is responsible for the new discipline bill. It is perhaps too soon to pass a very decided opinion on the effects of the existing law, but crimes of insubordination and violence to N.C.O.'s[1] seem to me to be on the increase in this country. Men know that they cannot be flogged, and it is by no means an uncommon thing for an excited and angry man to say "he will take five years" for the gratification he gains from striking a N.C.O. . . . .

Army Discipline Bill.

Feb. 1882.

I am fully aware that some of the measures which I have supported are unpopular with the army. I am far from insensible to misfortunes of this nature, but they are common to all men holding positions of responsibility, and I cannot hope to escape them. . . . .

Unpopularity of measures.

June 1882.

. . . . . Being a Conservative by inclination my bias is to let things alone; but when I am forced into a corner I consider I am bound to support the view which seems on the whole to be most advantageous to the service and the State. . . . . I am entirely opposed to anything in the shape of peace establishments for Indian service. We are at all times in the midst of possible enemies, and we should, under all circumstances, be prepared to meet them. . . . .

Conservative by inclination.

Peace establishments.

. . . . . In any case, I hope H.M.'s Government will not make the fatal error of sending too small a force in the first instance. It is always the cheapest thing in the end to crush your enemy at once, but unfortunately our policy is usually the other way. . . . .

Small Forces.

July 1882.

. . . . . Of course everybody knows that all our regi-

[1] Non-Commissioned Officers.

ments are not equally good, but I am quite sure that good Hindustani regiments will fight creditably alongside other troops, and it would be a profound political blunder not to give them the chance of showing what they are made of. I would not pit our Native soldiers against good Europeans, but if they can't thrash Egyptians, I shall be much surprised.

Hindustani regiments.

Sept. 1882.

. . . . . It does not seem to be quite understood at home that the withdrawal of Native troops for service beyond sea does not in any way weaken our military position in India. Indeed the employment of considerable bodies of Native troops in foreign expeditions enables us for the time to reduce our English garrison also, without risk. . . . .

Employment of native troops beyond sea.

I am glad to hear that deputations from the Native regiments in Egypt are to visit England for the purpose of being presented to the Queen. The men will be delighted to see the wonders of the West, and the effect on the army at large must be good. It is an excellent idea, and I hope it will be carried out successfully.

Native soldiers visiting England.

Jan. 1883.

. . . . . The military papers received by the present mail are not pleasant reading. I daresay I am very old-fashioned in my views, but it strikes me that the modern practice of discussing professional subjects in public speeches and public journals is detrimental to discipline and hurtful to the best interests of the service. Individual officers may gain a little fleeting popularity by airing their opinions before a public which is in most cases unfitted to form any useful judgment on the questions put before it, but they are apt to forget that their real critics are their comrades and subordinates, for it must be remembered that the writings of our military oracles are as keenly scrutinised and discussed in the barrack rooms as in any London club. . . . .

Public discussion of professional (Military) Subjects.

Feb. 1883.

. . . . . The usual financial scare is in the ascendant just now, and every military demand gets the cold shoulder. We are either in a state of financial jubilee or financial depression, and the latter is our condition at the present moment. . . . . Financial scare.

August 1883.

. . . . . Though India is quiet enough at present, there is plenty of explosive matter lying about. The Mahomedans and Sikhs both expect commotion of some sort, and evil disposed persons are taking advantage of the circumstance to create excitement among the people. . . . . Though there is no cause for alarm, it is on every ground desirable that the British garrison should be brought up and kept up to its full strength at all times. If we let the strength run down without remonstrance, Parliament may think our Establishment is too high, and move for its reduction. . . . . Maintenance of strength of British Garrison.

October 1883.

. . . . . The Amir told me himself when I met him at Cabul, that we could not expect him, except in self-defence, to injure the friends who sheltered him and treated him generously during his long years of exile, but he added very significantly, "I know what Russia's objects are, and I know that England does not want to extend her territories in the East." This observation seemed to me sensible and straightforward, and from all that has happened since, I think the Amir's conduct has conformed to the principle contained in it. Abdul Rahman and Russia.

CAMP, BANGALORE, 22*nd Jan.* 1884.

The Camp of Exercise assembled here has been in some respects rather disappointing.

. . . . . Notwithstanding these blemishes the camp will do much good. Roberts is full of enthusiasm, and inspires every one around him with a like spirit. All are anxious to learn, and the experience gained here must be beneficial, especially to the senior officers and staff. . . . . Bangalore Camp of Exercise.

About this time Sir Donald Stewart renewed his correspondence with Sir Peter Lumsden, who had now become a Member of the Council of the Secretary of State for India. Extracts from some of these letters will be given in the proper order of date relative to the quotations from note-books.

Sir Donald Stewart to Sir Peter Lumsden.

FORT WILLIAM, *25th Feb.* 1884.

. . . . . I quite agree with you about our communications with Quetta and Peshin, but you do not seem to know that we have now many thousand men at work on the Hurnai Road. *It is being really made for rails*, but we are not at present allowed to say so! Twelve or thirteen lakhs of rupees have been spent on this road during the past working season, and on the 1st April a regiment of Pioneers and three companies of Sappers are to be sent up to work at the cuttings in the Chupper rift. It is very silly trying to blink the necessities of the case as we are doing, but I don't care what the work is *called* so long as it gives the rail road in the end. Besides this, I have induced the Government to make a first-class road through the Bolan. It is now almost completed, and Sir A. Cunnynghame, who has just seen it, says rails could be laid on it now, as the gradients and curves are so good. I do not believe this myself, but, as a cart road, it will add enormously to the safety of the frontier. . . . I hope the Government will try and get the boundaries of Afghanistan settled by a mixed Commission of English, Russian, and Afghan officials. If this is not done we shall have trouble. I am most anxious to get these matters settled with Russia by treaty, as even Russia will have to think twice before she breaks her engagement. So long as we have no understanding, her Lieutenants in Central Asia will keep moving, whereas a fixed line would be a barrier which they could not break through at will. I hope the India Office will see matters in this light, and press their view on the Foreign Office.

Frontier railways.

4th March 1884.

. . . . . I have been pressing on the Government the necessity for pushing on the rail road to Peshin for the last two years, and I succeeded in getting permission to make a road *suitable for rails*. . . . .

Extracts from Note-book.

March 1884.

. . . . . In the estimation of a great many persons who are reckoned authorities on military matters, all our Native regiments are equally good or equally bad, as the case may be. Whereas the fact is that there is more difference between our best and worst Native troops than there is between the best and worst European soldiery. . . . .

Inequality in Native troops.

When we have got the railway to the Khojak I shall be quite happy, as operations in Southern Afghanistan will then be comparatively easy. We shall hold Candahar in the palm of our hand without the trouble of holding it before we require it. . . . .

Railway to the Khojak.

March 1884.

We have gone back to white summer clothing for the British troops in India. During my winter tour, I had many opportunities of discussing the matter with officers and men of all ranks, but I got the best information from private soldiers, who proved to me in the most convincing manner that the khaki was far more expensive in the long run than white, and, as one of my objects in introducing the khaki for summer wear was to save the men's pockets, there was nothing for it but to admit my mistake. The new arrangement of retaining a couple of khaki suits for musketry, fatigues, etc., is very popular, and these suits will always be ready in case of regiments suddenly ordered on service. . . . .

White Clothing *versus* Khaki.

SIMLA, 21*st April* 1884.

. . . . . The latest advance made by Russia in the East seems to have opened the eyes of the Home Government

with this result, that we have now received authority to go on openly with the Quetta Railway. I am happy to say that, in anticipation of this authority, a very great deal of work was done last winter on the lower section of the line upon which we had some 2000 men at work during the season. . . . . The new road through the Bolan Pass is also approaching completion, and when both works are finished we shall be in a position to pour troops into Afghanistan at any moment. . . . .

Quetta Railway.

Sir Donald Stewart to Sir Peter Lumsden.

SIMLA, 28*th April* 1884.

. . . . . I have no news except that those rascally Zhob Kakars have raided the Hurnai Railway and cut up some coolies. This is the fourth or fifth time these people have attacked our people, and the Government has determined to send a column to Shah Jehan's Head Quarters and bring him to book. These little expeditions are a great nuisance, but they are sometimes unavoidable, and it is quite impossible that we can overlook the present offence. The guard over the working party consisted of only fourteen men, but they beat off the Kakars some two or three hundred in number. . . . .

Zhob expedition.

Extracts from Note-book.

May 1884.

. . . . . I am very thankful that the Peshin railway was recommenced before the Russians went to Merve, as it would have been said, if we had begun these works now, that we were acting under panic. I have long seen that whether our policy is a forward one or one of what is called "masterly inactivity," it is our duty to have our frontier communications as complete as money can make them. I am happy to say there is no longer any grumbling over the money spent on the Bolan Road and Hurnai Railway. The former,

Frontier communications.

now very near completion, will be simply invaluable in case of complication in Afghanistan. . . . .

May 1884.

. . . . . The English nation seems to be the only power in the world which does not see that preparedness for war is the surest guarantee of peace and that undefended property invites attack. . . . . Si vis pacem para bellum.

Sir Donald Stewart to Sir Peter Lumsden.

Simla, 30th May 1884.

. . . . . Everybody is writing about the recent advance of Russia. . . . I have written a short note myself. The question is one of great gravity, but if we make up our minds to face the difficulty, I think we can do so at a moderate cost. My fear is that H.M. Government will not incur the odium of adding to our military expenditure. They can appreciate the blessings of peace, but they will demur to paying the premium to insure peace. Every one knows that adequate preparation for war is infinitely cheaper than war itself, and yet how few will act on that knowledge. I propose in effect to add about 15,077 Europeans to our present establishment without indenting for more than three or four regiments of Infantry and a few battalions of Royal Artillery. I propose to add a squadron to each of the Cavalry regiments and raise every Infantry battalion in India to 1000 rank and file. In the same way, I propose to add a fourth squadron to all the Native Cavalry regiments in Bengal and Bombay, and increase the Native Infantry regiments of both these Presidencies to 1000 bayonets. . . . . I would raise a few more Cavalry regiments on the footing of the Punjab regiments. . . . . We should also raise some additional Gurkha, Sikh, and Mahomedan regiments, but all depends on our getting the necessary European counterpoise. If we are to fulfil our obligation to Afghanistan the increase I have suggested is an absolute necessity, and if we do not Increase of the army.

take advantage of the present breathing time, I feel sure that you will see the Russians at Herat and at the foot of the Hindu Kush before many years are over your head. So far as India is concerned, I should not mind this, but if we allow her to cross the Afghan frontier unchallenged our prestige as an Asiatic power will have received a blow which will be absolutely deadly in its effect. . . . .

Sir Donald Stewart to Sir Peter Lumsden.

SIMLA, *6th June* 1884.

. . . . . The financial part of the question is serious, but if the necessity is proved, I think we can meet it by direct taxation. I cannot accept the responsibility of remaining silent when I am convinced that our present establishment is unequal to the task of holding India and defending Afghanistan too. . . . . I am determined to have the matter officially considered; that is my duty, and I shall not evade it. It would be a great relief to me to find that I am judged to be wholly in the wrong, for I am fully alive to the financial difficulties of the case. At the same time, I feel so strongly the dangers of our position that I feel under an obligation to retire from the office I now hold if H.M. Government will do nothing to meet the requirements of the present situation. Of course this is wholly between ourselves. I do not wish to imply that I cannot be wrong in my views, or that the Government may not be able to show that the action I propose is premature or ill considered in its details. As I said before, nothing would please me more than to find myself mistaken, both as regards the reality and extent of our danger and as to our incapacity adequately to meet it. My view, therefore, is that I should not be justified in continuing to hold the command of an army which I considered to be unequal to the responsibilities imposed upon it. I think I should give way to some one holding different views. . . . . I am not influenced by personal feeling or personal interest in this matter. My one wish is to do what is best for the public service and for that only. . . . .

Increase of the army.

Sir Donald Stewart to Sir Peter Lumsden.

SIMLA, *20th June* 1884.

. . . . . I confess I am unable to see the difference between spending the tax-payers' money on soldiers, and on roads and railways which are only useful for the movements of soldiers! . . . . . I should like to explain a point in my note which is very liable to misconstruction. I never intended to ask that the British Establishment should be *at once* increased by 15,000 men, or that the native army should be correspondingly increased *off hand*. My proposal is to have the strength of our Establishment sanctioned up to 75,000, so that we may depend on having in ordinary times an effective complement of about 70,000. Even this strength is not required all at once, but we should like to have the power of working up to that strength by degrees. . . . . Do not then go off with the idea that I am suffering from an attack of "Mervousness." All I want is that people should recognise the facts before their noses, and that they will do what every prudent person is bound to do in defence of his property. I should like to see things made secure against the coming storm, and I think it is probable the storm may not break at all, if it is seen that suitable preparations have been made to meet it. . . . .

Sir Donald Stewart to Sir Peter Lumsden.

SIMLA, *25th July* 1884.

. . . . . My proposals about increasing the army will go home tacked on to a despatch about the extension of frontier communications. The despatch does not, in my opinion, go far enough, and most of the Council profess to agree with me, but what they will say when it comes to the point I can't venture to prophesy. . . . . I would not add a single Native to the army till we have got the European counterpoise. My scheme is really not a costly one. . . . . Even ——, who still holds by Lord Lawrence's policy of masterly inactivity *beyond the border*, is all for masterly activity *within our frontier*, and yet he does not see that our

Increase of the army, etc.

troops should be increased. Perhaps there is nothing like leather, and I may be prejudiced, but I put the case in this way. Supposing India is called upon to put an army into Afghanistan which might meet 50,000 or 60,000 Russians, can she do this, meeting her enemy, say, at the Helmund? I should not like to say at the present moment that the army here is equal to that strain, and hence my object in trying to strengthen our position. . . . .

8th Aug. 1884.

I am glad to find from your letter of the 18th July that you agree with me in the main about the need for putting our house in order in time of peace, as there is no telling how long peace may last. It is understood here that the India Office will oppose my suggestions, but that will not prevent my putting them forward and pressing them to the utmost of my ability. . . . .

Extracts from Note-book.

Aug. 1884.

. . . . . The question of frontier defence has come up, and has been, to a certain extent, decided. We are unanimous about the necessity of making certain railways and roads, but I am afraid I shall have only a very limited number of backers in my proposals for the increase of the army. The question is known to be unacceptable to H.M.'s Government, but if men would only speak out what is in their thoughts and minds, there is hardly an individual of any weight in India who does not think that our army should be increased. . . . .

Frontier defence.

Sept. 1884.

It is a thousand pities that H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught was not given the Bombay Command. The Duke is one of the best General officers in my command. His judgment and good sense are conspicuous in every reference that has come before me from his Division.[1]

The Duke of Connaught.

[1] His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught was, at this time, in command of the Meerut Division. About a year after Sir Donald Stewart left India, H.R.H. became Commander-in-Chief in Bombay.

SIMLA, 13*th Oct.* 1884.

. . . . . Lord Dufferin's appointment as Viceroy pleases all classes here. Indeed so much is expected from him that it will be a perfect miracle if he does not disappoint some of his admirers. I hope he will have had an opportunity of looking into our proposals for strengthening the defences of India. . . . .

Lord Dufferin appointed Viceroy.

. . . . . As Lord Dufferin is considered an authority on the Eastern question, I was most anxious that my proposals should go home before he joined the Government, because I did not wish to expose myself to the suspicion that my views were prompted by any one. So far as they go, they are my own, and the question is one on which I claim a right to speak. . . . .

The Earl of Dufferin's arrival in India was quickly followed by the departure of the Marquis of Ripon for England. Lord Ripon, who as Viceroy had been so closely associated with Sir Donald Stewart for about four and a half years, has contributed the following note which cannot fail to be read with great interest as coming from the Viceroy who watched and controlled General Stewart's service when in supreme command at Cabul, and during the withdrawal of his army from Afghanistan, and who was in almost daily association with him during his time as Military Member of Council, and during about four years of his time as Commander-in-Chief.

Note by the Marquis of Ripon.

17*th April* 1902.

"It is not for me to speak of Sir Donald's Stewart's career as a soldier. It must be judged by professional men. Sir Donald was, however, so utterly disinclined, at all times, to parade his own merits and claims, that in these noisy days they are less generally known than they

should be. He was a good administrator, with a knowledge really marvellous of the Indian Army, for whose interests he was ever solicitous, though he had a constant regard, not always to be found in great soldiers, for financial considerations. He was eminently just, and one of the most loyal colleagues with whom I have ever been associated.

"But Sir Donald was not only a great soldier and a skilled military administrator, he was also a statesman with a statesman's grasp of public questions of all kinds, and an intimate and most accurate knowledge of Indian Civil administration. There was scarcely ever a question which came before the Viceroy in Council upon which he was not able to give advice of a high value, always listened to with attention and respect. My personal obligations to him were very great."

Extracts from Note-book.

Feb. 1885.

. . . . . A telegram says that the services of some troops offered by the Australian colonies have been accepted by the Government for employment in the Soudan. It is very right, no doubt, that such a public-spirited and patriotic offer should be accepted, but that such aid should be desirable is not very creditable to the military system of England, which is put out of joint by a war like that now being carried on in Egypt. I hope the country will now see that the truest economy is to be prepared for all ordinary eventualities. The necessity for creating reserves for the Native army is now being discussed here, but in my opinion we ought not to increase our Native troops until we have previously received the corresponding British counterpoise. To increase the Native army without increasing the British Garrison would be to repeat the error which made the mutiny of 1857 possible. I shall never give any proposal of that sort my consent. . . . .

Colonial troops.

Native army reserves.

Feb. 1885.

. . . . . The proper way to ensure the friendship of Russia is to have an army and navy prepared to fight her when required. Russia.

In the spring of 1885 arrangements for the long-looked-for meeting between the Viceroy of India and the Amir of Cabul were satisfactorily concluded, and the great and historic durbar took place at Rawal Pindi. Sir Donald Stewart was a prominent figure throughout the proceedings, but he has left no account of them from his own pen. It appears that he had one or more interviews with the Amir, some particulars of which were published at the time.

Extracts from Note-book.

March 1885.

. . . . . I fancy it is almost certain that the Amir will meet the Viceroy at Rawal Pindi. We propose to collect in his honour some The coming of Abdul Rahman.

10 Batteries of Royal Artillery.
3 British Regiments of Cavalry.
7 Native „ „
8 British Regiments of Infantry.
12 Native „ „

It will be a very fine force, and I have no doubt that the fame of it will be exaggerated throughout all the bazaars of Central Asia. . . . .

ALLAHABAD, 24*th March* 1885.

. . . . . I start this evening for the camp at Rawal Pindi. The Amir is expected there on the 28th or 29th, and he has, I hear, set to work to strengthen the fortifications of Herat, presumably under the directions of some of our engineers. I wish the Government had accepted my proposals of last year for the increase of the army. Had they done so, our regiments would by this time have been from 15,000 to 20,000 stronger than they are at this moment. Now, too, we see *En route* for Rawal Pindi.

what a fatal mistake Mr Gladstone made when he stopped the Quetta Railway. It would have been of untold value to us at this moment. Even the Bolan Road is a Godsend to us, and for that I have to thank Lord Ripon, as it was only by his support that I got that work done.

"*Reminiscences of the Amir*," *published in the* Bombay Gazette *of the 8th May* 1885.

When the Amir was passing the camp of His Excellency, the Commander-in-Chief of India, it was pointed out to His Highness as that of his old friend, Sir Donald Stewart, but Abdul Rahman merely looked up in a dreamy sort of way and said: "I suppose the great General's tent is the one near which the British flag is flying," and he then relapsed into silence again. It appeared as though the Amir had quite forgotten Sir Donald, but a day or two subsequently, when His Excellency's turn came to pay His Highness a visit, the latter showed that he retained a very vivid and pleasing recollection of the former. So eager was Abdul Rahman to renew his acquaintance with Sir Donald Stewart, that when he heard that His Excellency had arrived, he insisted on going out of the house into the porch to meet the visitor, and to bring him by the hand with the greatest cordiality. He said: "I am immensely pleased to meet my old friend, of whom I saw too little in Cabul. The days when we were together were stormy ones, and we were too busy to have many personal friendly meetings, much as I desired them; but this desire has been retained by me ever since, and the present fulfilment of it delights me. I am glad to meet your Excellency in India, and to find you in the high and distinguished position of Commander-in-Chief of the armies of Hindustan."

When they entered the house the conversation embraced a variety of subjects, until it turned upon troops and arms; then the Amir caused a Martini-Henry carbine to be produced, and shown to the Commander-in-Chief as a specimen of what Cabul was capable of turning out from

The Amir, Abdul Rahman, with Lord Dufferin and H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught at Rawal Pindi, 1885.

[*To face p.* 422.

its arms manufactory. A remark was ventured by an officer present regarding the difficulty of making Martini-Henry ammunition, on which the Amir, with an intelligent and significant look on his face, said: "I did not attempt to manufacture the arms until I succeeded in making the ammunition." [1]

Extracts from Note-book.

April 1885.

. . . . . The news from England during the last day or two has been more pacific, and it is possible that Russia is inclined to come to terms, seeing that we are quite prepared to fight, but it is a great satisfaction to us here to learn that H.M.'s Government will not relax or allow us to relax our preparations in the smallest degree. This is sound policy, and the country would have been saved millions if the Government had acted on the conviction that the best way of preserving peace is to be thoroughly prepared for war. . . . . The "Russian Scare."

The preceding and several subsequent notes have reference to the well-remembered "Russian Scare," which came to a climax on the occurrence of the affair of Panjdeh at the time of the Rawal Pindi durbar.

April 1885.

. . . . . Nothing can be better than the state of public feeling in this country regarding the Russo-Afghan question. Every Civilian that can carry arms is coming forward, and if war breaks out I believe our volunteer force, which is now about 12,000, will be trebled. The "Russian Scare."

SIMLA, 11*th May* 1885.

. . . . . The Amir seems very anxious to meet our wishes in all things. He has directed our engineer officers to be admitted to Herat with all honour, and they are to be empowered to improve its defences in every way. Hitherto he has always made polite Herat.

[1] The authenticity of this narrative is vouched for by General Sir Thomas Gordon, who was present at the interview.

excuses for keeping the officers of the Boundary Commission[1] at arm's length, but the Viceroy has cleared the ground and removed the suspicion which he has hitherto harboured regarding our good faith. . . . .

June 1885.

. . . . . I have just prepared a scheme for the general fortification of the North-West frontier. It is clearly our duty to make our frontier as strong as money can make it, but I must repeat what I have said many times before, that the proper line of defence against Russia is that of Candahar, Ghuzni, and Cabul. Abdul Rahman even admits that we shall be bound to go to Candahar whenever Russia makes a serious attack upon Herat or crosses the Oxus. England must be prepared for this contingency, and I shall certainly do my best to prepare India for the event. As H.M.'s Government so promptly responded the other day to our call for re-inforcements, I have not raised any question about the permanent increase of our establishments. . . . .

Frontier defence.

Sir Donald Stewart to Sir Peter Lumsden.

SIMLA, 12*th June* 1885.

. . . . . We have made all sorts of preparations in this country, and are now in a position to send a large army into Afghanistan at short notice. Most of this outlay will probably be wasted, but, in the end, good will have come of it, as both parties at home now see that India must be made as secure as money can make it. I send you a copy of our scheme for strengthening the frontier, with map. So far as it goes, I entirely concur in it except on two minor points. The suggested line of railway from Fazilka to Bhawulpore would be on the narrow gauge, and therefore hardly worth the cost as a *military work*. Then I am not sure that we could at present get a railway through the Khyber. The tribes are not British subjects, strictly speaking, and the political difficulties would probably be in-

Strengthening the frontier.

[1] Then in camp, under General Sir Peter Lumsden, on the Russo-Afghan frontier.

superable. In all other respects I am entirely with the Defence Committee. But when all is said, my idea is that we should defend India on the Candahar Cabul line. It cannot, I fancy, be turned on either flank, and the line cannot be penetrated except by direct attack on Candahar or Cabul. . . .

July 1885.

. . . . . Lord Randolph Churchill's appointment as Secretary of State for India is generally considered strange here. His ability is universally admitted, and my fear is that his short visit to India will do him more harm than good. A very clever man thinks he can *do* India completely in a couple of months, and the general idea he carries away is that old officials know nothing of the country or the people, and that the latter are habitually ill-treated by their rulers. The chances are therefore that Lord Randolph would have been a better Secretary of State if he had never seen India, and I think I can see evidence of this already in some of his orders. But, after all, he is a man of independent character, with a will of his own, and that is something. . . . .

Lord Randolph Churchill.

SIMLA, *July* 1885.

. . . . . Surprise has been expressed at my suggesting that the ultimate defence of India should be made on the line extending from Candahar to Cabul. Most people here think it would be unwise to adopt that line *now*, and I agree with them, but no one admits that we ought to allow Russia to seize and hold Afghanistan proper under any circumstances. Our present idea is to make our present frontier as strong as possible, and have everything ready for the occupation of Candahar in the event of an advance by Russia on Herat or Afghan-Turkestan. If our occupation of Candahar will have the effect of stopping the further progress of Russia good and well, but we shall make an almost irretrievable error if we permit her to gain a footing at Cabul. . . . .

Candahar-Cabul line of defence.

Sir Donald Stewart's period of service in India was now drawing to a close. He had

been offered and he had accepted a seat in the Council of the Secretary of State for India, and Sir Frederick Roberts had been nominated to succeed him, as Commander-in-Chief, in the end of November.

Almost the last entry in the note-books, from which so many quotations have been made, records the successful issue of General Stewart's strenuous and persistent efforts to place the army of India on a sound footing as regards numbers. His proposals were not sanctioned in full, but he was thankful for the mercies bestowed, and, considering the difficulties that always exist in carrying through proposals involving much extra expenditure, the grant to him of permission to add about 10,000 British and a proportionate number of Native Troops to the forces in India was no mean triumph.

August 1885.

Giving up the Indian Command.

I give up my command with unfeigned regret; but as my term of office expires next spring, it seemed to me that I was only doing my duty in accepting the seat in the India Council offered to me by the Secretary of State. I can further say, without reserve, that my command has from first to last been a pleasure to me. Though I have not in all cases been able to carry out my own views, I am bound to admit that they have always been treated with consideration, both in this country and at home, and I have at last succeeded in getting a hearing for my proposals for the increase of the Indian army and the defences of our exposed frontiers. . . . .

SIMLA, *Oct.* 1885.

. . . . . Just heard that all our proposals for the increase of the army have been agreed to. I presume that this

means the smaller increase asked for by the majority of my colleagues.[1] I am grateful for small mercies, but if we have difficulties in the near future with Russia, it will soon be seen that my proposals are not extravagant, and the first demand of the Indian Government will be for re-inforcements. . . . .

Increase of the army sanctioned.

The preceding brief record of the work of Sir Donald Stewart as Commander-in-Chief in India cannot be more fitly closed than by quoting in full the speech of the Viceroy, Lord Dufferin, at a banquet given at Viceregal Lodge, Simla, on the 13th October.

Speech by the Viceroy.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—I am about to do a thing which may not perhaps be altogether pleasing to the person in this room whose feelings and wishes I should of all things have been most anxious to consult; for, in the whole range of my acquaintance, I know no one who would be probably less gratified in having his services referred to in his own presence than Sir Donald Stewart; and yet it is the health of that distinguished officer I am about to propose to you. Unfortunately, the Viceroy of India is seldom able to consult the inclination of his friends; and I should have justly exposed myself to criticism and have caused great disappointment to every soldier—nay, to every servant of the British Crown in this country—had I allowed our illustrious Commander-in-Chief to quit the shores of India without attempting, in however imperfect a manner, to make him feel with what infinite regret we shall watch his departure, and with how tender and affectionate a regard we shall ever cherish the memory

[1] General Stewart had asked for upwards of 15,000 British and a proportionate number of Native troops.

of his presence amongst us. It is just forty-five years since Sir Donald Stewart joined the army of India; and in the military annals of this country it would be difficult to point to a career more deeply impressed with all those characteristics which ensure the success and adorn the renown of a great Commander. Abnegation of self, simplicity of purpose, devotion to duty, freedom from all taint of jealousy or personal ambition, professional industry, combined with those natural gifts and talents which are native to the genius of every born soldier, have—unassisted by any adventitious advantages of favour or patronage—raised Sir Donald Stewart to his present enviable and eminent position, have earned him the unbounded confidence and gratitude of his Sovereign, and have rendered his name at this moment more honoured and respected than that of any other man in India. It is not necessary that I should enumerate to those around me my guest's especial services. In recording the annals of the last half century, the hand of History herself will emblazon in imperishable characters his successive achievements, and mark the stages of his ever-widening reputation; for scarcely any considerable operation of war has taken place within living memory in which he did not play a distinguished part—whether while engaged, in early days, with the wild hill tribes upon our frontier; or, at the outbreak of the mutiny, when his calmness, enterprise, and courage will never be forgotten by those who were eye-witnesses of his conduct; or during the siege and storming of Delhi; or at the capture of Lucknow; or subsequently, while heading the Indian contingent under Lord Napier of Magdala in Abyssinia; or later still, when, after winning a decisive battle, he took possession of the enemy's capital, and by the wisdom of his policy, his moderation and humanity, and, above all, by the energetic and effective manner in which he sped his distinguished Lieutenant, Sir Frederick Roberts, on his successful march to Candahar, he crowned his career in the field in a manner so noble and generous as to send a thrill of loving admiration through the hearts of all his countrymen.

But my task would be unfulfilled if, in thus imperfectly glancing at Sir Donald Stewart's achievements as a soldier, I did not also allude to the equally valuable services he has rendered at the Council board; and here, Ladies and Gentlemen, I am able to speak from my own experience, and with all the force of that grateful and earnest conviction which a ruler must ever feel when, in troublous times and in the presence of great anxieties and responsibilities, he finds at his side a colleague in whose sagacity, calmness, experience, and loyalty he can place implicit confidence. And in saying this much, I feel that I am speaking, not only in my own name, but on behalf of every other Member of the Indian Government. One and all of us are deeply sensible that we are sustaining an irreparable loss in the departure from amongst us of so kind, so courteous, and so straightforward a coadjutor, who possesses the art of urging his opinions with as much engaging suavity as lucidity and force. On behalf, then, of all your colleagues, in the name of the army you command—and I will add of both the Civil and the Military Services of India—as the representative of your Sovereign and of her Government, as the spokesman of the natives of India, from amongst whom the major part of the gallant battalions you led to victory were recruited, I now bid you farewell. And from the bottom of my heart I trust that you will long live to enjoy your well-merited honours, and to assist with your fresh experience and ripe wisdom the counsels of the Indian Administration in England.

I need not say that in losing you now it is a great consolation to me, and to all of us who are responsible for the proper conduct of Indian affairs, that your connection with the Government of India is still to remain unbroken. Arriving in England at a time when external circumstances have necessitated the reconsideration of many difficult military and political problems, your presence among the official advisers of the Secretary of State cannot fail to prove of the greatest service and utility; and glad am I to think that, while the memory of your noble example and

great deeds will be stimulating every one of us out here—from the junior ensign in the army to the highest officials in the land—to emulate your patriotic devotion to the service of your Queen and country, you yourself will be pursuing at home, I trust with unabated strength, vigour, and success, that splendid and blameless career which, to the deep and unspeakable regret of your comrades, friends, admirers, and fellow-subjects, is so soon to reach its destined close in India.

Ladies and Gentleman, I call upon you to drink health, long life, and prosperity to His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief.

General Stewart gave up his command and sailed for England in November 1885.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE LAST

SIR DONALD STEWART arrived at home in December, and shortly afterwards was received by Her Majesty the Queen at Osborne, and invested with the insignia of the Grand Cross of the Star of India. He took up the duties of his new appointment without delay, and early in 1886 settled at No. 73 Harrington Gardens, London, where he made his home until he went to Chelsea Hospital as Governor in 1895. It will be remembered that he had, for a long time, desired to reach the goal of a seat in the Council of the Secretary of State for India. On returning in 1880 from his long tour of service in Afghanistan, he would gladly have sought the comparative rest which was to be found in the India Office. But, as he said in writing to his friend, Mr Forsyth, the temptation to become Commander-in-Chief of the army in India was, for family and other reasons, "a sore one." That the public service was greatly benefited by General Stewart's yielding to the temptation will be denied by none who watched his career during his term of office, or who have read the words of wisdom which have been gathered from his note-books and reproduced in the preceding chapter.

Sir Donald Stewart remained a member of the Secretary of State's Council until the day of his death, in 1900, but, unfortunately, it is not, in the nature of things, possible to give a detailed and specific account of the mode in which he performed his duties. The Council is a consultative body. The members—formed into various committees—the Military, the Financial, the Political, and so on, record minutes and "advise" the Secretary of State, but they have no separate or individual responsibility nor power to issue orders. Sir Donald Stewart does not seem to have kept notes or memoranda of his official work in England. His private correspondence was of a limited character. Very few letters written by him during the last fifteen years of his life are forthcoming. We have therefore nothing approaching to an autobiographical narrative of the close of his career, and must be content with the accounts and opinions which his friends have been able to supply from their memory. These materials, however, seem to afford ample evidence that, as a counsellor at Whitehall, General Stewart entirely maintained the great reputation which he had, without a break, consistently built up during his service of nearly forty-five years in India. "Sir Donald," as one of his colleagues at the India Office has said, "spoke little and wrote little in Council at home, but his words always carried the greatest weight, and were regarded as Gospel by those associated with him in office." But Sir Donald Stewart did many things during his last fifteen years besides delivering himself of opinions which were received as oracles at the India Office. His love of sport, though it

had been confined to very narrow limits during his last years in the East, had by no means died out. Soon after arrival in England, acquaintance was renewed with Sir George Stephen—now Lord Mount Stephen—whom Sir Donald Stewart had known as a school-fellow at Dufftown. Lord Mount Stephen had himself, in the meanwhile, risen to great eminence in Canada, where, amongst his other possessions, he counted an excellent salmon river. Many a time did General Stewart cross the Atlantic to pursue the sport in which he had been initiated some fifty years before.

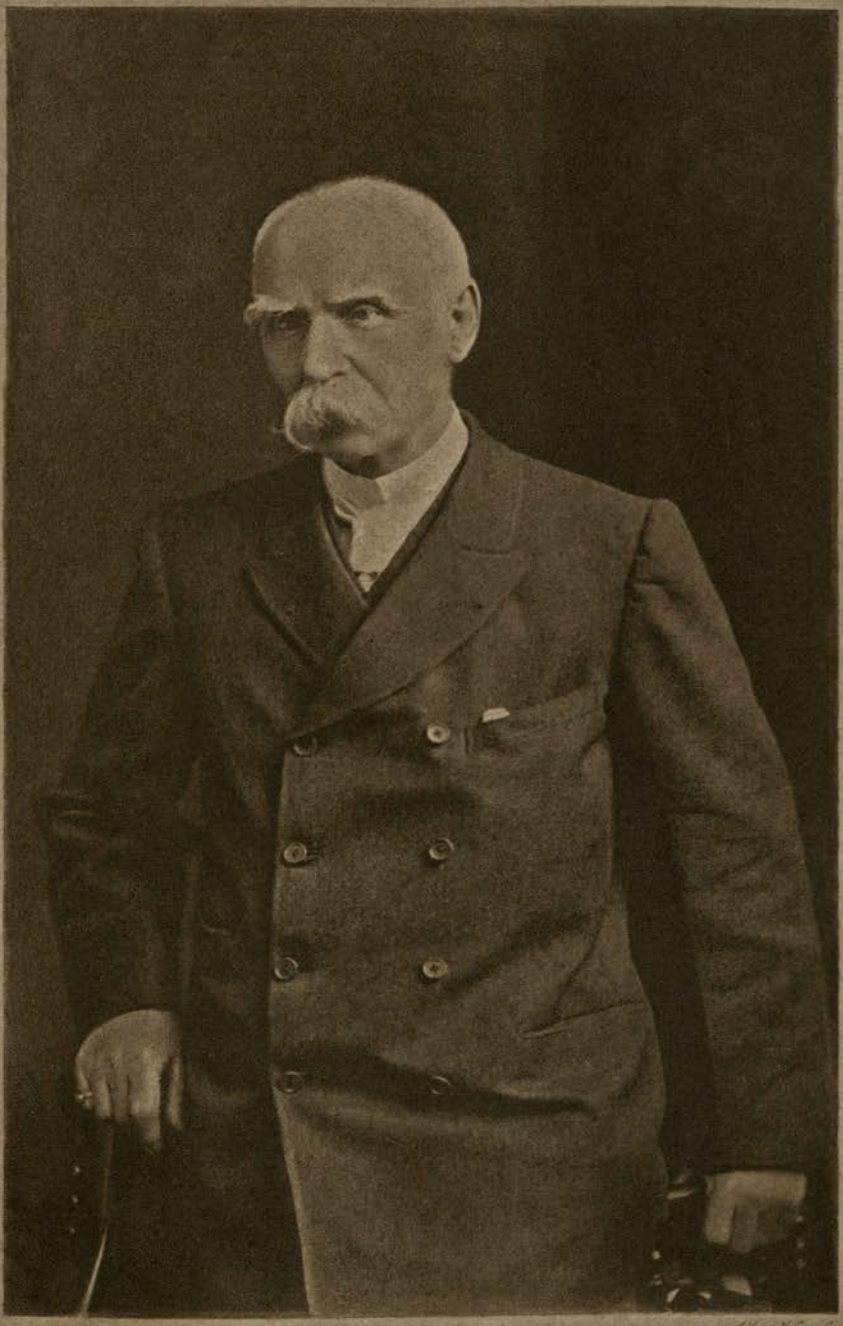
Sir John M'Neill[1] gives an account of the first of these expeditions to Canada.

My first meeting with my dear old friend Sir Donald Stewart was in the Head Quarter Camp at Cawnpore in 1858, before Lord Clyde, with whom I was living, moved on to Lucknow for the siege and capture of that place. Sir Donald at that time held a Staff appointment. I did not see much of him then, and in July '58 I went home, and served no more in India. We met again on his return home, having completed his time as Commander-in-Chief in India, and since then we have been much together. A more delightful or genial companion no man ever had. I went with him to Canada for salmon-fishing, to visit his school-fellow, the present Lord Mount Stephen, and it was quite refreshing to see his keenness in the sport and excitement in killing his first fish. We left England on the 29th May 1886 by the ss. *Aurania*. Sir Donald had never killed a salmon or visited Canada, and he was like a boy in his delight at the idea of the trip. We had a fine passage, and arriving in New York, on the 6th of June, went to the Hoffman House. Sir Donald was much interested in his first experience of an American hotel.

[1] Major-General Sir John M'Neill, V.C., K.C.B., K.C.M.G., G.C.V.O.

"Very comfortable but very expensive," he said. He much admired the Central Park. On arrival at Montreal, we proceeded at once with Lord and Lady Mount Stephen to their house at Causapscal, and I never shall forget seeing Sir Donald's excitement, when fast to his first salmon. After killing a good fish, he became at once infected with the "salmon fever." An amusing incident occurred at the Metis River. We were both fishing a large pool when I saw him hook a good fish, which presently took him down the river in his canoe. Being engaged myself with a salmon I did not pay much attention to his proceedings, but soon I saw his canoe poling up stream, he with a long slack line out and the fish jumping in front of him. They returned to the pool they had left, and at last, to his great delight, he killed it. His keenness was wonderful. Generally up first in the morning and latest in coming in, he was the youngest man there.

Lord Mount Stephen had arranged a trip for Sir Donald to British Columbia over the C.P.R. We had a private car and every comfort. We started early in July, and all went well till, at about 7 P.M. on the 6th, we saw a heavy bush fire ahead, and were presently pulled up, a long trestle bridge having been burnt in front of us that morning. We walked to the wreck and found a large party hard at work. The officials said they would send us on by a train from the other side of the remains of the bridge, but Sir Donald, who was most interested in the work, decided not to leave our car, but to remain till the work was finished, and on the 9th we crossed the new structure. Sir Donald would hardly leave the spot, and said he had never seen such wonderful skill and energy. We were again pulled up by a big fire beyond the Kicking Horse Pass—the whole side of a mountain covered with Douglas pine in flames. Fortunately, the loose rails were fixed before it reached a large pile of cordwood close to the train. The rest of our journey to Victoria, British Columbia, and back was uneventful. We reached Montreal in time to say good-bye to Lord and Lady Mount Stephen as they started on the journey we had just accom-



Sir Donald Stewart
G.C.B., G.C.S.I.
From a photograph taken in Montreal.

plished. On the 29th July we embarked on the *Polynesian* at Quebec for Liverpool. During the voyage the steward came to me one night and said: "I think the General is dying." On rushing to his cabin I found him with asthma, apparently struggling for life. After a time he recovered, and said: "A narrow squeak, old man," then turned over and went to sleep. Sir Donald was not a good sailor, but even at his worst he was always able to make a joke of his sufferings. He became quite devoted to the rivers, and, year after year, visited Canada.

Sir Donald Stewart also continued an ardent sportsman on the moor and in the field till the end. He generally spent part of the autumn in Scotland, and in many a *battue* there and in England he appeared as an expert shot. His love of games continued. He was often to be seen in the afternoon playing billiards at the United Service Club or the Athenæum. He also took a lively interest in golf, and became a member of Prince's Club at Mitcham. Colonel C. H. Gardiner, one of his golfing partners, remembers having been told by Sir Donald "that a good round of golf pleased him even more than a day's walk with his gun." He went much into society, and it is said, on good authority, that it was delightful to see him dancing reels in London ballrooms.

Another incident of the year 1886 was the conferment by the University of Oxford of the degree of D.C.L. In introducing General Sir Donald Stewart, Professor Bryce said he was one of the first of living generals whose greatness would be better known were it not for his singular modesty as well as dignity of character. His brilliant services in the last Afghan war, both in directing

the campaign and in bringing back the country to order, were referred to, together with his wise military administration of India.

On the 26th May 1894 General Stewart was gazetted to be a Field-Marshal. He was the fourth officer of the Indian army who had reached this high rank, his predecessors having been Sir George Pollock, Lord Napier of Magdala, and Sir Patrick Grant.

In April 1895, Sir Donald Stewart was appointed Governor of the Royal Hospital at Chelsea in succession to Sir Patrick Grant, the fact being announced in the following letter from H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge.

5th April 1895.

MY DEAR SIR DONALD STEWART,—It is very gratifying to me to be able to announce to you, that Her Majesty has been pleased to approve of your accession to the Governorship of that grand and noble old Institution of Chelsea Hospital, in succession to our late dear friend, Sir Patrick Grant. Nobody has greater claims to this fine position than yourself, and it is a great pleasure to me to be in the position to make you this announcement, and to offer you my best wishes on the occasion from my innermost heart,—I remain, Yours most sincerely,

GEORGE.

Some years later the *Morning Post* newspaper gave a pleasant picture of Sir Donald at Chelsea.

"No better appointment could have been made by the authorities. The friendship which had commenced between himself and the men who had fought with him during the dark days of the Indian Mutiny or the perilous times of the

Afghan war was continued in the quiet corridors and wards and the delightful grounds of Chelsea Hospital. The last five years of Sir Donald Stewart's life were undoubtedly the happiest. On a summer evening he would sit in front of the hospital with half-a-dozen old comrades and talk over the past. At the infirmary he was a frequent visitor, and the time he spent at the bedsides of the old men, recalling incidents in their lives when they were younger, did much to cheer the invalids. When he made a journey round the wards he was welcomed by every one. Nothing pleased him better than to see old soldiers. He had a very high opinion of the British soldier. 'Some of them may occasionally take a little too much to drink and may be wild,' he would say, 'but see them on a long march without food or rest, see them in a tight corner with only a few rags to their backs and soleless boots, and you see then that the British soldier is the finest man in the world.'"

A touching incident of the Diamond Jubilee Procession was the display of enthusiasm with which the Chelsea Pensioners, from their position on Constitution Hill, recognised their Governor riding in his Field-Marshal's uniform. He was admittedly one of the most distinguished-looking men in that picturesque pageant.

Sir Charles Brownlow, a great personal friend of Sir Donald Stewart, and who has already been mentioned as a companion in the field as far back as 1854, contributes a valuable letter written in the year 1897 with reference to the occupation of Chitral and the pursuance of a policy on our North-Western frontier, which led, in the end, to attacks by the tribes on our outposts in the Khyber Pass and the Samana range, and culminated in the great Afridi campaign of 1897-98. Sir Donald Stewart describes himself as having

been throughout a warm opponent of the "forward" steps which in this letter he so trenchantly denounces.

Sir Donald Stewart to Sir Charles Brownlow.[1]

27th Aug. 1897.

DEAR BROWNLOW,—I can only concur in every word you say about frontier affairs. The authorities both here and in India were over and over again warned that their wicked new departure must sooner or later involve them in political trouble and ruinous military expenditure, producing effects which must alienate every friend we had on the border. It was only the other day that they were crowing over the relief of the Chitral garrison without a hitch. My comment was that the movement of a compact force through Swat and Bajour when the crops were standing was no evidence of the friendly feeling of the people who feel keenly our breach of faith in planting ourselves in their country in spite of our promise to withdraw on the relief of the Chitral garrison.

Then look at the humiliating position of the small posts dotted all over the country, posts which were established for the purpose of "dominating" the Waziris, Douries, Orakzais, etc., etc. When the proposals to establish these posts came home, I protested with all my might on not only political, but on military grounds. I pointed out that for the purpose of dominating the tribes, the garrisons must be sufficiently large to supply movable columns which could march through the country in any direction; that small posts and cantonments, that in time of need could only just defend themselves, would be a source of weakness instead of strength to us, and that they would be liable to be hemmed in and practically

[1] In forwarding this note, Sir Charles says: "Donald Stewart was within a couple of hundred yards of me when I was shot through the lungs in 1854, and has ever since been an object of admiration and profound affection."

besieged themselves till strong columns came from India to relieve them. This is precisely what has happened, though I did not expect that my prophecy would be soon fulfilled. It makes me mad to think of the folly of the situation. Here we have 40,000 men engaged in suppressing tribal troubles of our own breeding, and for this job the whole Indian army has been set in motion. It is too terrible. . . . . To see all this waste of blood and treasure in the midst of India's other trouble is too sad for speech. Ever yours,— D. M. S.

The sixtieth year of Queen Victoria's reign was also the year of the Golden-wedding day—the 19th of November—of Sir Donald and Lady Stewart. On the 2nd of July of that year Lady Stewart gave a large garden-party in the grounds of Chelsea Hospital.[1] Very many old friends were present, among whom was Mrs Mulcaster, the lady who had so promptly hastened to the rescue when the Indus boat accident occurred more than forty-one years before. On the wedding-day itself some three hundred friends came to the Hospital to offer their congratulations and "the drawing-room was filled with flowers and gifts."[2]

Sir Donald Stewart continued active and vigorous for two or three years longer. He suffered in health more than once during the winters, but as late as November 1899 he was able to join one of Sir Charles Brownlow's shooting parties at Warfield Hall in Berkshire. At the end of that year came an attack of bronchitis, on re-

[1] Similar garden-parties were given in subsequent years, and were much looked forward to and enjoyed.

[2] For a list of the sons and daughters of Sir Donald and Lady Stewart, see Appendix IV., all survivors of whom—with the exception of the youngest son, who was then in Africa—were present at the celebration.

covery from which he was advised to go to Algiers for change. He went there early in February 1900, accompanied by his son Donald, who was at home on leave from Kumasi, of which place he is Commissioner. Lady Stewart received good accounts from Sir Donald, who at first seemed to enjoy life in Algiers. A few extracts from the last letters received from him recall once more the sense of pleasure derived from reading those from India, Abyssinia, and Afghanistan. It is interesting to notice that each one of these letters bears a separate number, after the plan laid down as far back as 1856.[1]

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

No. 8.

THE ENGLISH CLUB, MUSTAPHA SUPERIEUR,
ALGERIA, 21*st Feb.* 1900.

We have been leading such a gay life of late that I find it difficult to get time to write letters. If one does not write immediately after breakfast the day is gone. We lunch out almost every day at all sorts of hours. . . . . We are most fortunate in being out of England just now, and I am most thankful for the change. . . . .

I am going this afternoon to see two old ladies whom I met at Meerut in 1856. They were then living with their brother, Mr Wallace Dunlop, the collector. . . . . They were lively young women and wrote a book about India, "A Timely Retreat." They just got down to Calcutta or Bombay in time to escape the Sepoy outbreak, and their account of their short visit to India was most amusing. . . . .

P.S.—The news from the Cape is not very exciting, but no news is generally good news, and I hope Ladysmith will be able to hold out to the end.

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[1] See p. 23, *supra*.

The next letter describes the beginning of the illness which, alas, was to prove fatal.

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart.

No. 13.

8th March 1900.

. . . . A few days ago I went out calling with Donnie in a Victoria and did not wear my fur coat. The sun was bright, but the wind was bitter. . . . When I returned in the evening I felt queer over the region of the lungs, but it passed off, as I thought, and I attended a big dinner-party at the Club. . . . . I had a nasty attack of asthma in the night . . . . I smoked one or two of my cigarettes and got through the night somehow, and in the morning had the doctor, who said I had a slight attack of bronchitis. . . . . I remained in bed for two days, but I have been allowed to dress to-day, though not to leave my room. . . I am doing famously, but must be more careful in future. . . .

After all the exciting news from the Cape there is a lull, which, in a way, is a relief, but I would like to see Buller's force out of those horrid Drakenberg mountains in North Natal. We have had more than enough of that kind of fighting. There are rumours of other successes by Roberts. . . .

. . . . . .

On the day on which the preceding letter was written, a scene was being enacted at Windsor Castle, the tidings of which must have greatly interested and gratified Sir Donald Stewart, though, apparently, they did not reach him till after he had become unable to write. Lady Stewart herself gives the particulars of the conferment of the last honour bestowed in life in recognition of her husband's services.

"I received the decoration of the Crown of India from our good Queen's own hands on the

8th March 1900. I received a command the day before to attend luncheon at Windsor Castle. I did not know the reason till I arrived there, but Lady White, who travelled in the same train, and was summoned in like manner, told me she thought it was for the decoration which had already been given to Lady Roberts. Prior to that I think the order was never given to the wife of a Commander-in-Chief.

"The Queen, accompanied only by Princess Henry of Battenberg and Princess Victoria of Schleswig-Holstein, received me, after lunch, in a small room, so there was as little formality as possible. The Queen said a few pleasant words, asking for Sir Donald in her gracious manner which soon set me at ease."

Sir Donald Stewart to Lady Stewart (the last letter).

No. 15.

12th March 1900.

To-day I have been pronounced sound by the doctor, but he recommends me to be very careful when out of doors. I intended to have gone for a drive, but there has been a sudden change in the temperature, and I shall not go beyond the garden. . . .

I am anxious about the relief of Mafeking. It would be very unfortunate if the place were to fall now. It would not help the Boers much, and yet its loss would sadden many people in England. These rumours about peace are somewhat disconcerting. For my part, I don't believe there is a word of truth in the reports . . . . I hope nothing will be listened to except unconditional surrender on the part of the two republics, and every loyal subject of the Crown must desire to see them converted into Crown colonies. For our own protection something of this sort must be the outcome of the war, and I am sure

the country would not stand any settlement that would be more favourable to the Boers. They will lose nothing except their independence and their power of making war in the future. . . . .

Soon after this letter was written a relapse took place. Bronchitis was followed by severe asthma, which affected the heart. Sir Henry Norman, the great friend and companion of nearly fifty years, writes:

"On hearing that Sir Donald Stewart was seriously ill, Lady Stewart, accompanied by her daughter, Mrs Eustace, and myself, started for Algiers, and, travelling without stopping, arrived there on the afternoon of the 25th March. He was very weak, but was conscious and recognised us. He had been most carefully attended by an English doctor and two nurses, as well as by his son, but for two or three days previous to our arrival the doctor had lost all hope of his recovery, and very early on the morning after our arrival he passed away quite peacefully."

Before evening many telegrams of condolence had reached Lady Stewart. Her Majesty the Queen said: "Pray accept my truest, warmest sympathy on the loss of your beloved husband. He is a most serious loss. I entertained the sincerest regard for him."

Sir Donald Stewart's death was the occasion of an outburst of courtesy and good-feeling and of generous recognition of a great soldier. The French authorities and the general community on the spot did all that could be done to show that, if Donald Stewart had died on foreign soil, he had died amongst those who could recognise the

claims of a brave and distinguished man. All possible respect was paid to his memory. The coffin, covered with palm branches and French and British flags, and, placed on a gun-carriage, was escorted by the General commanding at Algiers, accompanied by a brilliant staff and a gallant cavalcade of all arms, from Mustapha Superieur to the English Church. The church was surrounded by French troops. After the service each regiment marched past the coffin at the salute. On the following day, the gun-carriage with the body, escorted by French troops and a guard of English bluejackets and marines, was carried by a launch to H.M.S. *Juno*, and then conveyed to Gibraltar. Thence, after a change of vessel, the coffin was brought to England.

The funeral took place on Saturday, the 14th April. A service was held in the chapel of Chelsea Hospital. The body was afterwards carried in military procession to Brompton Cemetery, where it was laid to rest with all military honours. The attendance was very great. The Queen, the Prince of Wales, and the German Emperor were represented. The pall-bearers were all old friends and comrades.[1]

"The Queen," writes Lady Stewart, "sent a beautiful laurel wreath with kindly remembrance written in her own hand. This token of regard I greatly treasure. The German Emperor also sent a wreath which was put on the coffin by one of his own officers, a compliment much valued by all my family."

At the meeting of the Council of India next

[1] See Appendix V.

after Sir Donald's death, and before the business of Council commenced, the Secretary of State, Lord George Hamilton, expressed in a few words his regret at the loss of Sir Donald Stewart, and proposed that an expression of the sympathy of the Secretary of State in Council should be offered to Lady Stewart. Sir James Peile said in reply:

"My Lord,—As the member of your Lordship's Council who has most unwillingly become the senior on the death of Sir Donald Stewart, I venture to take it upon me to say on behalf of my colleagues, how entirely we are with you in what you have said, and in what you propose to do. We are all touched with the same emotion to-day. Your Lordship will miss a most experienced and sagacious adviser, full of ripe wisdom both as a soldier and as an administrator. And we shall miss the shrewdest and kindest of colleagues in whom dry humour pleasantly veiled a sound and strong common-sense. Sir Donald Stewart was one of those rare men whose presence gives distinction to this Council. My Lord, few of us can hope to be remembered very long after we have passed away from the scene of active life, but I think that there is no one who will easily forget Sir Donald."

The following opinions show the impression which he made on the minds of those with whom he came into most intimate intercourse while a member of the Indian Council. Sir Alexander Arbuthnot, for many years a fellow-member, writes:

"My personal acquaintance with the late Sir Donald Stewart began in 1875, at Simla; but it was not until I joined the Council of India in 1887, that I was in a position

to form an adequate estimate of his character. I then became a member of the Military Committee of the Council, of which Sir Donald Stewart was Chairman. We met every week at the meetings of the Committee, and during the intervening days I often enjoyed opportunities of discussing with him the business, and specially the military business, of the Council. I found him to be possessed of great knowledge of the military requirements of India, and not only that, but also well-acquainted with the civil administration. His views on all the questions that came before him appeared to me to be singularly impartial and free from prejudice; perfectly free from those Presidential jealousies by which the settlement of Indian questions have been so often hampered. Having passed the greater part of my service in one of the minor Presidencies (Madras) I was able to appreciate the eminent fairness with which Sir Donald Stewart discussed the qualities of the various branches of the native Indian army. While recognising the superior fighting qualities of the Sikhs and Gurkhas, he discerned with the eye of a statesman the inexpediency of relying exclusively upon those races for filling the ranks of our armies.

"It was the same with all the many and various questions which he was called upon to consider. He treated them all with a single-minded desire to dispose of each case upon its own merits. I cannot help regarding his death as an irreparable loss to the Council of India, and to the country in the government of which that Council takes an active share. It is not too much to say that he was both respected and loved by his colleagues."

General Sir Oliver Newmarch, formerly Military Secretary at the India Office, says:

"The most important military measures in which Sir Donald was interested while I was at the India Office were the abolition of the Presidential army system and the consequent consolidation of military administration in India, the completion of the coast and frontier

defences, the mobilisation of the army, the utilisation of the armies of the native states, the increase in the pay of the native army, the improvement of the fighting qualities of that army by the elimination of the less warlike races, and by recruiting more largely from the frontier tribes, and the general introduction of the class regiment and class company system. The first of these was, perhaps, the most important military change of the century with regard to the army in India; and that it was carried out with so much success and so little friction was, in a great measure, due to his wise and moderate counsels. Subsequent events have also justified the caution which he urged when dealing with the proposals for increasing the frontier tribe element in the native army.

"Perhaps his most remarkable characteristics in dealing with military questions were his caution, his moderation, his simple common-sense, and last, but not least, his strong views as to the necessity for economy. He held, with the Duke of Wellington, that the army had no worse enemy than the man who increased military expenditure beyond what was absolutely necessary. He never considered what was the best ideal army, but what was the best you could have for the money which was available.

"His knowledge and memory of all military matters was extraordinarily extensive, ranging from the details of regimental organisation to the highest branch of military administration and command. His varied knowledge of civil, political, and financial matters enabled him to view proposals affecting the army, both in peace or in war, from a higher standpoint than is common with most purely military administrators. I must not omit to mention his remarkable tact in dealing with opposition, which was due mainly to his unfailing good-temper. He never lost his temper under any circumstances, so far as my knowledge extended. Of my own obligations to him as Chairman of the Military Committee, I can only speak with the most affectionate gratitude. Both personally and as representing the Military Department, I received from him the most constant assistance and support."

General Sir Allen Johnson, who had also worked as Military Secretary at the India Office during Sir Donald Stewart's time, and who had known him well in the Simla days, writes :—

". . . . His special qualities were, I should say, alike in little things as in great. Shrewd common-sense, very considerable power of seeing the essential points of the question and of detecting its weak points; great accuracy in respect to facts, due, in no small degree, to a quite exceptionally retentive memory and freedom from bias. He was, in my opinion, an acute judge of character. I should class him as one of the "straight" men, and I never, in any question that I had to bring before him, found in his judgment thereon any trace of the *arrière-pensée*. He went on its merits. In minor matters, where no question of principle or justice was involved, he placed trust in those he trusted, and did not think it needful to do the work over again."

Sir Arthur Godley, Permanent Under Secretary of State for India, describing his knowledge of Sir Donald Stewart, during a period of fourteen years, says :

"Sir Donald Stewart was appointed to a Membership of the Council of India in December 1885, by Lord Randolph Churchill, at the expiration of his term of office as Commander-in-Chief in India. At the end of 1895 his tenure of the post, which is limited by Act of Parliament to ten years, came to an end, but he was re-appointed by Lord George Hamilton for a further term of five years; a compliment which at that time had been paid to only one other member of Council, Mr Bertram Currie, in 1890. Sir Donald was within a year of completing this final period of service when his death removed him from us. As to the details of his military work in India Office, I can add nothing to what is supplied by

Sir Oliver Newmarch and Sir Allen Johnson, who have recorded opinions in which I heartily concur. But the testimony of these two officers is necessarily confined to his work in the Military Department. As Under Secretary of State during the whole of his term of office, I had opportunities which no one else, perhaps, can have had in an equal degree, of estimating the value of his general work; and I have no hesitation in saying that I have seldom, if ever, had the good fortune to work with a more useful public servant.

"He came to us with the great prestige of his military career in India—the most distinguished career that India has seen for thirty years—and with the reputation of having filled the high and difficult office of Commander-in-Chief with unusual success. From the first, he spoke with authority on his own subjects; and he soon showed that there were few subjects among those which came up for consideration at the India Office, which he might not have called his own. This office, dealing as it does with the affairs of an Empire, consists necessarily of many departments, the duties of which are as distinct, one from another, as those of the Treasury from the Home Office, or the Foreign Office from the Board of Trade. Each of these departments is in relation with a Committee of Members of Council, and each Member of Council serves upon not less than two and not more than three different Committees. But I have often wished that Sir Donald Stewart could have served on every one of them. His knowledge of Indian subjects seemed to be universal, and his insight, his shrewdness, his tact, and his moral courage were such as to make him an invaluable counsellor at all times, but especially in matters of difficulty. In the sphere of military questions he was, of course, supreme. His qualifications for dealing with them need not be dwelt upon. But it may be worth while to refer especially to two of them—his extreme, but not excessive caution (for the critical faculty was strong in him), and the admirable temper and good humour which enabled him to discuss the most contentious questions without the smallest heat

or friction. He was never angry himself, and it seemed to be impossible to be angry in his presence. It is sometimes charged against those who leave India for places of authority in this country that they view with a certain amount of prejudice the proposals of their successors, who are still bearing the burden and heat of the day. Whether this be true of others or not, it was certainly untrue of Sir Donald Stewart. His temperament was eminently judicial, he regarded every proposal that came home with a perfectly open mind, and in doubtful cases would always strain a point to avoid overruling a proposal which he could only half approve. But his astuteness, it must be added, was most remarkable; and all who have worked with him must remember the comical expression of countenance with which he used to detect and unmask an attempt to get at the windward side of him. In questions of foreign policy and of relation with the native State he was an admirable adviser. For this part of his duty his long experience and thorough knowledge of the native character and his familiarity, both in peace or war, with the frontier tribes, gave him special qualifications. His memory for facts and for persons was wonderful. He had the whole internal history of India for the last fifty years at his finger's end; and it would be no great exaggeration to say that he knew something of the history of every officer, civil or military, who had served with him or under him in India. If information was wanted about any such person, or even about his wife or family, it was always well worth while to consult Sir Donald Stewart, and he was seldom consulted in vain. So far as this particular development of memory is concerned, I have certainly never known his equal. The only other point in his official character to which I purpose to refer is his remarkable financial ability. During the whole of the time that he was at the India Office he was a most efficient and active member of the Finance Committee, and he took a lively interest in the more abstruse questions of currency and public accounts, which are intelligible to none but financial experts. The last important duty

which he discharged, outside of the India Office, was that of a Royal Commissioner to enquire into the Financial relations of the United Kingdom and India. In this capacity he rendered excellent service, which is specially acknowledged in the report of his colleagues, published a few weeks after his death. It would be a great omission if I were to conclude this account of Sir Donald Stewart, as a Member of the Council of India, without referring to his great popularity, alike among his colleagues and among the whole staff of the India Office. In appearance and manner, he was the ideal British soldier; and I believe I may safely say that it was impossible to work with him without loving him. At the first meeting of Council after his death, Sir James Peile, as the senior member, referred in a short, but singularly graceful and eloquent speech, to the great loss which we had sustained; and I believe that none of those who were present will forget the unmistakable signs of emotion and sympathy with which it was received. Of no one, with whom I have had to do officially, could it more truly be said that his loss was absolutely irreparable."

The reference made in the opinion just quoted to Sir Donald Stewart's financial ability recalls a characteristic of his conduct of the Afghan campaign which has not, perhaps, been so fully brought out as it deserved, viz. his persistent striving after a true and proper economy in expenditure. He is described as having a "hatred of waste." He abhorred the cost of dragging a heavy siege-train for the purpose of assaulting Ghâzni, when he had good reason to believe that the fortifications of that place were more or less in ruins, and incapable of standing a siege. But in this matter he had to bow to orders from India. It must be clearly understood, however, that both in his private and public capacities,

Donald Stewart had much generosity in his nature. He set his face against useless expenditure and extravagance, but when appeals were made to his benevolence, or when he was convinced that a great end, such as the increase of the army, had to be achieved, he would respond ungrudgingly.

Mr George Ricketts, whose bright picture of his friend after the siege of Delhi will be remembered, thus writes of him, as he was in England, more than forty years later.

"I need hardly say it was always a great pleasure to me to meet him; he was so cheery and light-hearted, and saw the amusing side of things. I cannot believe that ever in his life—and he must have been sorely tried on many occasions—he was ever depressed, or at the end of his resources, and the greater the pressure, with his strong good sense and courage and self-reliance, the better would he have responded to it. . . . . I cannot say how much I miss him. He was so shrewd and just and level-headed. It was always a satisfaction to me to have a talk with him on Indian affairs, for he was far above all the silliness of mystery and reticence which makes such prigs of many ordinary officials, and his judgment and opinions of men (especially) and things were always valuable."

The curtain now falls on the strong, brave, genial, and eminently wise and good man, whose life of seventy-six years it has been the object of this book to follow. Endeavour has been made to allow him to tell his own story and to portray his own character. How far the attempt has been successful is for those who knew and loved him to say. The highest aspiration of the present writer is that the friends, who, for the most part, probably do not know that Donald Stewart has

R. G. Murdock, photo. Allen Edo. Sc.

Mamie A Stewart

left behind him letters which tell the story of the most important periods of his life, should read them and say:—"He has lived again for us."

If this hope is fulfilled there is little need of a further review of his character. It will suffice, by way of farewell, to glance at some of the most prominent traits. The early days show many attractive points. Always ready to enjoy sports and games to the full, Donald Stewart never allowed his love of them to become a ruling passion or to interfere with the higher objects of his life. In his college career he showed himself able to combine a boy's pleasures and amusements with earnest hard work.

Later on, when he had joined the army, he devoted himself to becoming a good soldier and an efficient linguist, and ere long he was recognised as one of the best of regimental officers.

One[1] who knew Donald Stewart as a captain in 1852-53, writes:—

"All those who were associated with him were impressed by his calmness under difficulties and strict adherence to the business he had in hand, never swerving to the right or to the left in the performance of his duties. He did at all times what he believed to be right, and served his country without ever giving a thought to himself. He had a supreme contempt of humbug, and made all under him thoroughly understand what his views were on that subject. He told the plain truth and magnified nothing."

What Donald Stewart was during the Indian

[1] General Osborn Wilkinson, C.B.

Mutiny, in his service in the Adjutant-General's department in the Abyssinian expedition, his own letters and the reminiscences of his friend, Sir Henry Norman, have made clear, and the picture is surely a delightful and elevating one. A friend who knew him in his early Simla days, and again later, when he had risen to be Commander-in-Chief, says:

"Donald Stewart was a sterling man all round, who made friends of all who came in contact with him, and besides figured strongly in some of the great events in recent Anglo-Indian history. I never heard of his having made a private enemy, and the combination of social and official success is rare."

To what has been already said of his life in the Andamans may be added a few words written by Major-General Protheroe, who served with him there and afterwards in Afghanistan.

"He was certainly the best administrator the Andamans ever had. His character was one which impressed his friends and those who had the privilege of serving with or under him, with the greatest esteem and respect for him. He had a great sense of justice in all his dealings. He was not a self-seeker, and, I believe, his one desire in life was to do his duty to his Queen and country to the best of his ability."

To Sir Donald Stewart's life and service in Afghanistan a very large portion of this book has been devoted. That period brought out in strong relief the highest and best points in his character. For nearly two years he exercised supreme authority

in the various commands which carried him from Mooltan *viâ* Candahar, Kelat-i-Ghilzai, Ghuzni, Cabul, and the Khyber to Peshawur. During a long and trying time he manifested the utmost firmness, determination, and wisdom, maintaining throughout a calmness of bearing which was the admiration of all who saw him.

The high standard of success achieved as Commander-in-Chief in India, and as a member of the Council of the Secretary of State at home, has been proved by the testimony of his colleagues, one of whom is reported to have said "that not a day passes at the India Office without the Members of the Council feeling how much they lost when Sir Donald was taken away." Critics who have read thus far may perhaps say: "We have been told much about Donald Stewart's virtues, but practically nothing about his faults. The picture is one-sided; it is monotonous." To this the answer is that the material on which this book is based—and every effort has been made to collect it from a wide field—contains no record of fault or shortcoming.

There has been nothing to conceal, to extenuate, or explain away. A study of the long series of Sir Donald Stewart's letters and papers seems to produce a quickened sense of esteem and affection. It is impossible to withhold admiration of the stoical firmness which neither physical danger, nor the vicissitudes of official life, nor the dread of responsibility could shake. Simplicity, straightforwardness, loyalty, and wisdom are manifest throughout, while alongside these strong qualities the gentler attributes

of warm and steadfast friendship, kindness and geniality, the devotion of the husband and the father, will always be found, recalling the great poet's ideal description of the "Happy Warrior,"

> "Who, though thus endowed as with a sense
> And faculty for storm and turbulence,
> Is yet a soul whose master-bias leans
> To home-felt pleasures and to gentler scenes."

APPENDIX I

STATEMENT SHOWING MILITARY CAREER OF F.-M. SIR DONALD STEWART.

1st Appointment—Ensign, 12th October 1840. 9th Bengal N.I., 5th March 1841.	
Lieutenant .	9th Bengal N.I., 3rd January 1844.
Captain .	9th Bengal N.I., 1st June 1854.
Major . .	Brevet, 19th Jan. 1858. Bengal Staff Corps, 18th February 1861.
Lieut.-Colonel	Brevet, 20th July 1858. Bengal S.C., 12th October 1866.
Colonel .	Brevet, 20th July 1863.
General Officer	M.G., 24th December 1868. L.G., 1st October 1877. General, 1st July 1881.
Field-Marshal	26th May 1894.
Staff Services	D.A.A.G. Delhi Field Force, 2nd July 1857 to 29th December 1857. A.A.G., H.Q., Bengal, 30th December 1857 to 1st June 1862. D.A.G., H.Q., Bengal, 2nd June 1862 to 30th September 1867. (Brig.-Gen., Abyssinia, 1st November 1867 to 7th July 1868.) Brig.-Gen., Bengal, 8th July 1868 to 19th June 1869. Maj.-Gen., Bengal, 1st April 1876 to 17th October 1880. Lt.-Gen. Commanding, S. Afghanistan, 27th October 1878 to 1st May 1880. Lt.-Gen. Commanding, N. Afghanistan, 2nd May 1880 to 31st August 1880. Ord. Member of Council of Gov.-Gen. of India, 18th October 1880 to 6th April 1881. Com.-in-Chief, E. Indies, 7th April 1881 to 27th November 1885. Gov., Royal Hospital, Chelsea, 29th March 1895.
Decorations, etc.	C.B., 14th August 1868. K.C.B., 25th July 1879. G.C.B., 21st September 1880. Created Baronet, 8th April 1881. C.I.E., 24th May 1881. G.C.S.I., 7th December 1885.

APPENDIX II

DEATH OF SIR HENRY BARNARD—TAKEN FROM A "NARRATIVE OF THE CAMPAIGN OF THE DELHI ARMY," BY MAJOR H. W. NORMAN.[1]

ON the following morning (5th July) Sir Henry Barnard was attacked with cholera, and expired early in the afternoon, greatly regretted by the whole force, and most so by those who knew him best. Brave, kind-hearted, and hospitable, it is doubtful if he had an enemy. Cholera, then as ever, was present in the camp, and the death of any one excited no surprise, but no doubt Sir Henry Barnard's attack was due in a great degree to his unsparing exposure of himself to the sun at all hours of the day, and to great mental anxiety. His indeed had been a most trying position. Arriving for the first time in India, on assuming command of the Sirhind Division in April, he found the whole of the native troops, to whose characters and peculiarities he was, of course, an utter stranger, in a most discontented and unsatisfactory state, and a few weeks placed him at the head of a weak force called upon to take Delhi and to crush the great strength of the mutineers there concentrated. Had he not felt anxiety he would not have been human, and he as truly died of causes purely arising out of the mutiny as any soldier who fell in battle when opposed to the insurgent Sepoys.

[1] Now Field-Marshal Sir H. W. Norman.

APPENDIX III

NOTES BY MR GEORGE RICKETTS, C.B. (DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OF LOODIANA IN 1857), REGARDING THE NATIVE DOCTOR OF THE 9TH NATIVE INFANTRY, WHO JOINED IN THE MUTINY OF THE CORPS.

. . . . . I well remember Donald Stewart's story about the Mahomedan native doctor of his old regiment. The man (I forget his name) had been long in the regiment. He had much influence, which he exerted to send the men wrong, inciting them to mutiny. In this he was assisted by the drill havildar. Stewart told me the whole story as we sat talking over affairs, the incidents of the siege, his ride from Agra to Delhi, and everything that came into our minds relating to that wonderful story of the mutiny. . . . . Stewart was riding down one of the streets in Delhi, when the city was only partially in our hands, when he met a small party of our native soldiers in charge of a number of prisoners. He casually looked them over, and was very glad and surprised to find his native doctor amongst them. The man also at once recognised Stewart, and to his surprise and amusement forthwith started a stream of flattery and blarney, that by the mercy of God he had at last found a real old friend, who would vouch for his perfect innocence and protect him! Cannot you fancy the scene? I can see Stewart now, as I saw him then, for he was full of life and action—and quite unconsciously—when he told you an amusing story. He ordered the guard to be careful of the prisoner, and to march him off to the city

lock-up, where prisoners were collected, intending to look him up afterwards and get what information he could out of him (for men in that predicament in those days were often most communicative, to ingratiate themselves with any one in authority, to establish their own perfect innocence). Stewart went later in the day and found the man had never been brought there; he was gone, and there was an end of it, and he (Stewart) could not remember to what regiment the guard belonged, so he could not seek them out and have them punished. Stewart told me the man was well off and very 'cute, and probably had humbugged the guard, or, as likely as not, bought himself off. A bag of rupees in those days would have bought any man's freedom, certainly from any Pathan guard, in or out of Delhi; and Sikhs were not much better. Stewart told me the man was a Hindustanee by birth, but he would certainly not go home to his own people. He had married a Peshawuri woman when the regiment was quartered at Peshawur, and possibly he had headed off in that direction, where he could lie hid amongst her people, could he pass the cordon we tried to keep up —with more or less success, between Hindustan and the Punjab—and there our talk about the fellow ended. On this clue, such as it was, to begin with, I caught the man, or rather, one of my people did, and I sent him to Stewart.

I stayed only a few days in Delhi, and on my return to Loodiana, which was my station, I told the whole Delhi story, as far as I had picked it up, to my native officials, and amongst them to one *Ahmud Ali*, who was far and away the best *native detective I* ever employed, calling his attention to the possibility of the native doctor passing up country through Loodiana, and I thought no more about the matter. Not so Ahmud Ali. He smelt some sport in the matter, and it hung in his mind. Loodiana is about 210 miles from Delhi, about sixteen marches. Some time after my return I saw a party

of Northern Pathans, with some well-loaded four-bullock hackeries,[1] on the encamping ground at *Loodiana*. I went amongst them, as was my custom, and found they were *John Nicholson's orderlies returning to their homes*, and the hackeries were loaded with their loot. They made a twenty-four-hours' halt at Loodiana. Ahmud Ali, as was his habit also, was looking around, went gossiping amongst them, and, as was his custom, went to have his usual gossip with *Mahomed Ali, the native doctor of the Loodiana jail*. He mentioned the arrival of Nicholson's orderlies and their loot, which they talked of with much envy. Mahomed Ali asked if there was any sickness amongst them, *as one of them had sent to him for some quinine*, which he had supplied. Ahmud Ali came at once and told this to me. "What of it?" said I, "Every one gets fever and asks for quinine." "*Not men like these Junglee Pathans*," said Ahmud Ali. "What do they know of quinine? There's something in it I cannot understand, and they have an ekka with them with the curtains down; this also puzzles me." "Oh, as for the ekka," I said, "possibly it is a Shahzadee[2] being taken up North by the jemadar." (It was the common broad joke of the day, that the Pathans, and especially the Guides, had each a four-bullock hackery of loot and a Shahzadee on the top. Loot, especially from Delhi, acted like magic as a recruiting agent, and the arrival of loot from Delhi in various hands was the only way in which the fact of the capture of Delhi became generally believed.) Ahmud Ali left me quite dissatisfied. Possibly he knew more than he told me. He returned to the subject the next day, when Nicholson's orderlies had left, and begged me to allow him to *follow them across the Sutlej to Philour* and have one more try, and I let him go, for I always had to work him much his own way. He knew much more than I did. The upshot of it was that he returned late in

[1] Carts.

[2] Princess.

the day, *with the native doctor tied up tight behind the ekka*, and his wife and an old woman, her attendant, in the ekka, the top of which and all underneath was stuffed as full as it could be packed with silks and shawls and all manner of miscellaneous loot from Delhi. I at once telegraphed to Donald Stewart that I had caught his man. He answered back, "Send him well guarded to me." So I packed him off at once. With him I also sent the bulk of the loot to the Delhi prize agents, after tossing some silks and a few shawls to Ahmud Ali. He dearly loved a good bit of plunder, and you should have seen his eyes glisten and his salaam to the ground as each thing was shaken out and tossed to him, and his strut as he walked away with the things on his arm, the envy of many lookers-on. This is the detail of the actual capture. The Philour encamping-ground is well outside the native town, quite in the open country. Ahmud Ali first of all viewed the whole ground from a distance, and saw that the orderlies' party were all pitched in a convenient spot, near to the supply house and the road, but in a far-off corner was the ekka, with the curtains up, and three persons with it, two women and a man, besides the driver. They were sitting about near; one of the women cooking. Ahmud Ali saw enough to satisfy him that this party was quite independent of the orderlies. He changed his clothes for those of a common field labourer; he approached the party with the ekka leisurely from behind, and began to potter about the field near them, thinking how he was to identify his man and not excite suspicion; he had no one to help him. He could think of no better plan than quite quietly to call out the man's name. This he did, and the answer came: "Who is calling me?" This was quite enough. The man was caught off his guard. Ahmud Ali walked up to his man and said: "*The burra Sahib*[1] *at Loodiana wants you*, and you have to come along with me." He put the pony

[1] *I.e.* the Deputy Commissioner.

into the shafts, tied the man's hands, and fastened him to the ekka, put the women inside, and took the reins himself, for after all this trouble, he was not going to throw a chance away, and he brought them straight into Loodiana to me. It was a neat and well-done capture, and more to Ahmud Ali's credit than to mine.

APPENDIX IV

SIR DONALD and Lady Stewart had the following sons and daughters :—

1. Frank, the eldest son, who died in 1862, aged 12 years.
2. Norman Robert, now Sir Norman Robert Stewart, Bart., C.B., Commandant of the Hyderabad Contingent.
3. Flora, married first to Surgeon-Major R. W. Davies, Army Medical Service, who died in 1889. Afterwards to Major Sir Walter Jenner, Bart., late 9th Royal Lancers.
4. Marina, married to Colonel F. Eustace, C.B., Royal Horse Artillery.
5. Captain Sir Donald Stewart, K.C.M.G., Chief Commissioner of Ashanti.
6. Kathleen, died in 1870.
7. May, married to Captain Walter Ross, Durham Light Infantry. Died in 1891.
8. Norah, married to Captain Leopold Jenner, King's Royal Rifle Corps.

APPENDIX V

MEMORANDUM

THE following arrangements will be observed on the occasion of the Funeral of the late Field-Marshal SIR DONALD STEWART, G.C.B., G.C.S.I., C.I.E., Indian Staff Corps, Governor of the ROYAL HOSPITAL, CHELSEA.

The first portion of the Funeral Service will be held in the Chapel in the ROYAL HOSPITAL at Noon, on Saturday, 14th April 1900, and will be attended by—

Field-Marshal The Right Hon. Viscount WOLSELEY, K.P., G.C.B., Commander-in-Chief,

and by

The Officers of the Head Quarters Staff of the Army.

The body will be deposited in the Chapel of the Hospital and will be attended as follows:—

The Orders and Medals of deceased, borne by a General Officer.

The Bâton of deceased, as a Field-Marshal, borne by a General Officer.

PALL BEARERS.

Field-Marshal Sir F. HAINES, G.C.B., G.C.S.I., C.I.E.
General Sir H. W. NORMAN, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., C.I.E.,
General Sir J. M. ADYE, G.C.B.
General Sir M. A. S. BIDDULPH, G.C.B.
General Sir D. M. PROBYN, V.C., G.C.V.O., K.C.B., K.C.S.I.
General Lord CHELMSFORD, G.C.B.
General Sir A. ALISON, Bart., G.C.B.
General Sir P. S. LUMSDEN, G.C.B., C.S.I.

General Sir A. B. JOHNSON, K.C.B.
General Sir J. J. H. GORDON, K.C.B.
General Sir H. H. GOUGH, V.C., G.C.B.
General E. F. CHAPMAN, C.B.
Major-General Sir J. C. M'NEILL, V.C., K.C.B., K.C.M.G.
Colonel CUNLIFFE MARTIN, C.B.
Colonel Sir C. B. EUAN-SMITH, K.C.B., C.S.I.

A Guard of Honour of the Foot Guards will be mounted at the Chapel, and will receive the body with the usual honours as it leaves the Chapel, from which it will be borne by a carrying party of Royal Horse Guards.

The body will leave the Chapel on a gun carriage for BROMPTON CEMETERY, with an escort of the Royal Horse Guards and accompanied by a squadron of the 10th Hussars and a squadron of the 13th Hussars. These two squadrons on arriving at the Cemetery will form up on either side of the gates, so as to allow the carriages, etc., to pass between them.

The Pensioners of the ROYAL HOSPITAL, the Boys of the DUKE OF YORK'S ROYAL MILITARY SCHOOL, and the Corps of Commissionaires will line BURTON'S COURT.

A salute of 17 minute guns will be fired by a Battery of Royal Horse Artillery, in the grounds of the Hospital, on the funeral cortège leaving the Chapel.

A Guard of Honour of the Foot Guards will be stationed at the entrance to the Cemetery, and will, with its band, accompany the body to the grave.

A party of the Foot Guards will carry the body from the gun carriage to the grave.

A space round the grave in the Cemetery will be kept by a detachment of the Foot Guards.

EVELYN WOOD, A.G.

WAR OFFICE,
12th April 1900.

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